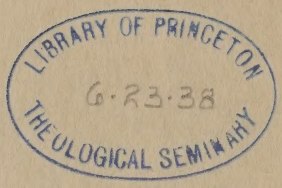

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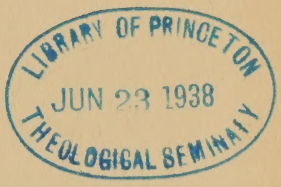
CHRISTIANITY, CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM

A Historical Analysis



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To
JACOB STEKETEE
and
CORNELIA STEKETEE HULST
In recognition of all that they have done
to make this work possible

CHRISTIANITY, CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM

Chapter I

WEALTH AND POVERTY IN THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

In this and some of the following chapters it will be seen that the teachings of Jesus Christ and of the Apostolic Church have frequently been claimed by the socialists as the fountain and source of socialism, by the capitalists as the justification of capitalism, and by the communists as the basis of communism. Furthermore, almost all the sects which arose within the Christian Church before the Reformation, and practically everyone of the later denominations as well, found certain passages in the New Testament which in their opinion placed their particular brand of Christianity above all the others. In some cases, when the New Testament did not furnish sufficient proof to justify their mode of life, they would turn to the Old Testament for further evidence. This latter practice was true especially of the major Protestant denominations, which professed to see much that was evil in the medieval Church.

No historian can presume to pass judgment upon all the multifarious interpretations of debated texts in the Bible or the writings of the Church Fathers. He can merely point out that many opinions are said to have arisen from the study of these literary sources, and that these opinions, which often seem to contradict each other, were welded into confessions of faith and pronouncements of policies laid down by church councils and synods. In how far these creeds and pronouncements conform to the truths to be found in the Bible is a matter which the historian does not feel qualified to discuss.

Jesus of Nazareth chose his earliest followers from among the lower classes in the social order. His disciples were all very ordinary persons before the fire of missionary zeal began to course through their veins. Gradually, however, some of the leaders in the Jewish

churches, lawyers, centurions and patricians adopted the essential principles of the primitive Christian faith. Rich and poor, strong and weak, Jew and Gentile, learned and ignorant—everybody was welcome in the church of the Nazarene.[1]

According to the Acts of the Apostles about three thousand persons were converted on the day of Pentecost, and a few days later two thousand joined the ranks of the Christians. For a short time the Apostolic Church was marked by a practice which closely approached communism, but it should be observed that the sale of property by the Christians and the giving of alms was voluntary. St. Peter said to Ananias, "While your property remained, was it not your own? and after you had sold it, was not the money yours?" Even the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century admitted the truth of this observation, although Calvin, Melanchthon and Luther, as we shall observe, felt obliged to enlarge upon it.

In a relatively short time the attempt to hold all or nearly all property in common proved very difficult to accomplish. Society in the Roman Empire was too complicated for that, and gradually the Christians accommodated themselves to the social, political and economic conditions prevailing all about them. In such great centers of commerce and industry as Rome, Alexandria, Ephesus and Antioch the simple tenets of the faith of the first disciples was modified. Many of the Christians served in the imperial armies, many others joined the associations or corporations of bakers, skippers, wine growers, carpenters, etc.[2]

There can be no doubt that the Christians of the second and third centuries took to heart the admonitions of their great missionary and teacher, St. Paul, who advised them to love their neighbors, for "the greatest thing is love" (see I Cor. XIII). In the Epistle to the

[1] J. Lebreton, *La vie chrétienne primitive* (Paris, 1928); F. Kiefl, *Die Theorie der modernen Sozialismus über den Ursprung des Christentums* (Kempten, 1915); A. Steinmann, *Jesus und die soziale Frage* (Münster, 1921); A. Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums,* 4th ed. (Leipzig, 1924), Vol. I; Ch. Poulet, *Histoire du Christianisme,* Vol. I (Paris, 1932); J. Lebreton and J. Zeiler, *Histoire de l'Eglise depuis les origines jusqu'a nos jours,* Vol. I (Paris, 1934 or 1935, but no date given); pp. 1-125; J. de Jong, *Handboek der kerkgeschiedenis,* Vol. I (Utrecht, 1936), pp. 42-48.

[2] E. Vogt, *Soziales Leben in der ersten Kirche* (Breslau, 1911); I. Seipel, *Die wirtschaftsethischen Lehren der Kirchenväter* (Vienna, 1907); A. Bigelmair, *Die Beteiligung der Christen am öffentlichen Leben in vorkonstantinischer Zeit* (Munich, 1902).

Romans, Ch. XIII, the apostle said in plain words that everybody should be subject to the powers which happen to be established. His brief treatise is the most influential pronouncement about political science written in the first seventeen centuries of the Christian era, for it was implicitly adhered to by nearly all the great writers and teachers of the Christian world before the eighteenth century. He had written thus: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; and they who resist shall receive damnation."

The thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians and the thirteenth chapter of Romans are of primary importance in the political and social history of Europe. Although all Christians were deemed equal before God, they were exhorted to remain peaceful and patient amidst tribulation and oppression. The slaves were therefore persuaded to desist from rebellion or revolution, the poor laborers were enjoined not to fret about low wages, and the rich were admonished to give freely of their substance, though they were not asked to give up all they owned. Other statements of a similar nature from the pen of St. Paul will be encountered in our subsequent chapters, where we shall find them interpreted by some of the leading Protestants. In short, political or social equality was not preached by the chief missionary of the Church in the Roman Empire.

St. Peter also enjoyed great authority among the early Christians, and his words were likewise of considerable social and economic importance. He said, "Servants, be subject to your masters with great fear; not only to the good and gentle but also the perverse" (see I Peter II, 18). In the apostolic constitutions it was even stated that the admittance of a slave in the Church was dependent upon the permission of his lord. Athenagoras wrote, "We also have slaves." [3]

The following words of St. Paul have long been the subject of controversy among modern Catholics and Protestants: "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called. Are you called being a servant? Care not for it, but if you may be made free, use it rather. For he who is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free-

[3] Ir. E.H.M. Beekman, *Katholicisme Calvinisme Kapitalisme* (Schiedam, 1935), p. 33.

man; likewise also he who is called, being free, is Christ's servant. You are bought with a price" (I Cor. VII, 20-23). Whatever the theologians may think of these words, it is certain that before the end of the Middle Ages the people of Christian Europe saw in them little justification for revolt against established authority in the political, social, or economic order. Chrysostom remarked in his commentary on these texts that one gains little by being set free by masters of this world: "You are the slave of Christ, just as is your master. Joseph was also a slave, but he was nevertheless the most free of all men." [4]

There has also been much controversy about the question whether the Protestants were the first to hallow their vocation in this world. The German word *Beruf,* that is, *vocation,* is often said to have been introduced among the German people by Martin Luther. Before Luther's time this word is not supposed to have been known. But I cannot see why the German word *Beruf* is to be treated so differently from the Dutch word *beroep,* which has exactly the same meaning, was widely employed in the Middle Ages, and was not altered afterward. Moreover, manual labor, which had not been honored adequately by the ancient world, was treated with much respect by the early Christians. Since Christ Himself had been a carpenter, and since St. Paul gloried in his ability to make tents for a living, the Christians in Rome and elsewhere thought so much of their daily labor that in the catacombs their tools were frequently buried with their bodies. The members of the grain corporation which distributed the grain among the populace, those who weighed and measured the grain, honored their vocation by having the grain measure placed upon their graves as a fitting emblem. Furthermore, in the catacombs under Rome and its vicinity may be seen the emblems of the associations of wine growers, skippers, bakers, and carpenters.[5]

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[4] See *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* First Series, Vol. XII (New York, 1899), p. 109.

[5] Beekman, *l.c.,* p. 22. For a more detailed treatment of the term "vocation" and its meaning before Luther, see H. Pesch, "Christliche Berufsidee und kapitalistischer Geist," in *Stimmen aus Maria Laach,* Vol. LXXV (1908), pp. 525ff. Even in Germany it is now generally conceded that the word *Beruf* was not altered by Luther. See the excellent summary of this question in F. Schreyvogl, *Ausgewählte Schriften zur Staats— und Wirtschaftslehre des Thomas von Aquin* (Jena, 1923), p. 339: "Der Begriff der

Commerce was regarded with like respect by the early Christians. Although Clement of Alexandria, Ambrose, Cyprian and Augustine saw great danger in the type of society built up by commerce and industry when plied on an enormous scale, as was the case in Rome and Alexandria, they did not thereby condemn trade in itself. Such is still the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. There is also little sense in denying the obvious fact that the primitive church did not object to the unequal distribution of the world's goods. No protest of any importance has yet come to light. Clement of Alexandria derived the existence of private property from the friendship between God and man: "God grants temporal goods to mankind in order to bestow benefit upon it." The concensus of opinion among the Church Fathers was that earthly possessions were of little importance and might easily distract the mind of the devout Christian. But they were not evil in themselves. It was excessive attachment to them which resulted in sin.

As one distinguished Dutch Catholic writer has said, "The Christians lived among the heathen, and tried to dissolve Roman customs by infusing the Christian spirit, so that the gifts of God's grace could be poured out into the activities of mankind. A sanctification of the calling, or vocation, may thus be recognized. There is a diversity of gifts, says St. Paul, but they all proceed from one and the same Spirit. True, there were degrees of value, and the spiritual powers were higher than the temporal powers. That which is higher objectively is not necessarily higher subjectively. Each person can attain the greatest degree of sanctity in his respective vocation. This is what the Middle Ages taught, as may be gathered on every hand in the theological treatises and the books of sermons. To flee the world was a novelty in the time of St. Anthony (*ca.* 285 A.D.). And asceticism was neither new then nor widespread." [6]

There was, however, such a wide variety of belief and practice within the confines of the Christian Church of the third and fourth centuries that generalizations are apt to be misleading. On the one hand we meet with extreme forms of asceticism which impelled the devout to spend their lives upon pillars in the desert or in lonely

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vocatio ist sicherlich dem ganzen Geist des Mittelalters gemäss. Darum wenden sich sowohl Paulus als Pesch mit Recht gegen Max Weber."

[6] Beekman, *l.c.*, pp. 24-26.

huts, while on the other hand a widespread relaxation of discipline and religious fervor can be noted in all the important sources. In one of the best church histories we read, "There were fewer marks of mystery in the lives of the Christians in the third than in the second century, and consequently, the Christians were better known in the third century." It is pointed out that in spite of the moral restrictions which continued to limit the participation in public functions, this participation proceeded apace. Many official duties were performed by the Christians, both in the lower ranks and in the imperial court. As the numbers of the Christians increased, the contagion with the world also increased.[7]

Many of the leading writers and preachers among the Christians, whom both the Catholics and the Protestants call the Church Fathers, continued, however, to warn against the spirit of worldliness that was stealthily creeping into the Church at large. For example, the eloquent Chrysostom, in his second Homily on Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, wrote these interesting words about wealth and poverty: "Neither wealth nor poverty is excellent in itself, but through those who use it. The Christian shines out in poverty rather than in riches." [8] Tatian said: "Not only do the rich among us pursue our philosophy but the poor enjoy instruction gratuitously: for the things which come from God surpass the requital of worldly gifts." [9]

St. Augustine, the most influential writer among the Fathers, expressed certain views which may be considered as typical of the patristic school of Christian authors and doctors for the period between 200 and 450. In his sermon on Matthew XIX, 17, he made this significant remark: "If then they ought not to 'trust in riches,' not to confide in them, 'but in the living God,' what are they to do with their riches? Hear this: 'Let them be rich in good works.' . . . Must they then lose all they have? He said, 'Let them communicate,' not 'Let them give the whole.' Let them keep for themselves as much as is sufficient for them, let them keep more than is sufficient. Let us give a certain portion of it. What portion? A tenth? The Scribes and

[7] J. Lebreton and J. Zeiler, *Histoire d' Eglise,* Vol. II (Paris, 1935), pp. 429-437.

[8] See *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* First Series, Vol. XIV, p. 374.

[9] H. H. Scullard, *Early Christian Ethics in the West* (London, 1907), p. 157. On the treatment of the poor, see also pp. 195, 216, 218, 245, 248, 257, 274, 277.

Pharisees gave tithes, for whom Christ had not yet shed His blood. . . . 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.' He does not deal softly with us; for He is a physician, He cuts to the quick. . . . I have admonished the rich; now hear, ye poor. Ye rich, lay out your money; ye poor, refrain from plundering. Ye rich, distribute your means; ye poor, bridle your desires." [10]

Here, as usual, St. Augustine speaks in the vein of a good Christian, frowning upon the spirit of capitalism and socialism. If he had been familiar with communism, such as we shall discuss in Chapter IX, he would undoubtedly have condemned it in very strong language. Avarice in all forms he detested, theft he attacked as a deadly poison, and graft he regarded as a great danger. He wished that all men and women would remain true to the purity of the Ancient Church. It is not surprising that his wisdom appealed to both Catholic and Protestant thinkers, as will appear.

One symptom of relaxation in Augustine's time was the practice of lending money on interest, something which had been almost universally condemned by the early Fathers. As early as the middle of the third century, Cyprian complained about bishops who became so immersed in affairs that they managed huge domains, were in charge of fairs, and exacted interest on loans. Citing passages from Psalm XIV (XV) and Ezekiel XVIII, he warned against violating the commandments of God. It should be noted, however, that the word *usury* did not have the same meaning in the third century as it has had in modern times, and that economic conditions have also changed very considerably.[11]

A few passages from the works of several Church Fathers will indicate what was meant by *usury,* and what was the attitude of the leading Fathers toward Mammon worshipers. Cyprian, in his treatise *On the Lapsed,* wrote thus: "Each one was desirous of increasing his estate; and forgetful of what believers had either done in the times of the apostles, or always ought to do, they, with the insatiable ardor of covetousness, devoted themselves to the increase

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[10] *Nicene Fathers,* First Series, Vol. VI (New York, 1888), pp. 367-368.

[11] G. Salvioli, *Le capitalisme dans le monde antique. Etude sur l'histoire de l'économie romaine* (Paris, 1906), pp. 238-242; I. Seipel, *Die wirtschaftsethischen Lehren der Kirchenväter,* p. 162.

of their property. Among the priests there was no devotedness of religion; among the ministers there was no sound faith; in their works there was no mercy; in their manners there was no discipline. In men, their beards were defaced; in women, their complexion was dyed: the eyes were falsified from what God's hand had made them; their hair was stained with a falsehood. Crafty frauds were used to deceive the hearts of the simple, subtle meanings for circumventing the brethren. . . . Very many bishops who ought to furnish both exhortation and example to others, despising their divine charge, became agents in secular business, forsook their throne, deserted their people, wandered about over foreign provinces, hunted the markets for gainful merchandise, while their brethren were starving in the church. They sought to possess money in hoards, they seized estates by crafty deceits, they increased their gains by multiplying usuries." [12]

Lactantius, who lived in the first half of the fourth century, left two interesting statements about loaning money on interest. In the *Divine Institutes* he outlined the duties of a Christian, and argued as follows: "If he shall have lent any money, he will not receive interest, that the benefit may be unimpaired which succors necessity, and that he may entirely abstain from the property of another. For in this kind of duty he ought to be content with that which is his own; since it is his duty in other respects not to be sparing of his property, in order that he may do good. But to receive more than he has given is unjust, and he who does this lies in waiting in some manner, that he may gain booty from the necessity of another." [13] Again, in the *Epitome of the Divine Institutes,* Lactantius wrote, "He will not give his money to usury, for that is to seek after gain from the evils of others; nor, however, will he refuse to lend, if necessity shall compel anyone to borrow." [14]

Hilarius (Hilary), bishop of Poitiers, was an influential writer in the Western Church. Although married, he was elected unani-

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[12] See *The Writings of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage,* tr. by Rev. R. E. Wallis, Vol. I (Edinburgh, 1868), p. 355. The passage is from Ch. VI. The original is to be found in Migne's *Patrologia Latina,* Vol. IV, col. 432-434.

[13] See *The Works of Lactantius,* tr. by W. Fletcher, Vol. I (Edinburgh, 1871), p. 399. The passage is from Book VI, Ch. XVIII. The original is to be found in Migne's *Patrologia Latina,* Vol. VI, col. 698-699.

[14] Ch. 64, *Works,* Vol. II, pp. 149-150. Migne, *Patr. Lat.,* Vol. VI, col. 1076.

mously as bishop of his native city, Poitiers, in central Gaul (France). For his defence of orthodox Christianity against the Arians, who gained numerous converts among the Germanic barbarians, he was exiled from Gaul for three years (356-359) by Emperor Constantius, but afterward he was able to continue his work in Gaul. His remarks about money lent on interest are significant: "The words in Psalm XIV [XV] tend to lead one to the perfect consummation, as advised in this heavenly admonition. . . . How intolerable it is to bestow such a benefit upon a needy person, that he will be in still greater want than before, and you increase his misery through robbery? If you are a Christian, what reward do you expect from God, if you count on the damnable practice of extorting gain at the expense of others? If you are a Christian, how can you lend your idle money to your needy brother, for whom Christ died, and in return expect to add something to your own treasure?" [15]

St. Augustine expressed his opinion on usury in the commentary on Psalm XXXVI: "I would not have you be lenders of money on usury; and I would not have you be such for this reason, because God would not have you. . . . When does it appear that God would not have it so? It is said in another place, 'He that putteth not out his money on usury.' And how detestable, odious, and execrable a thing it is, I believe that even usurers themselves know. Again, on the other hand, I myself, nay rather God Himself, bids thee be a usurer, and says to thee, 'Lend unto God.' If thou lendest to man, hast thou hope? And shalt thou not have hope, if thou lendest to God?

"If thou hast lent thy money on usury to man, that is, if thou hast given the loan of thy money to one from whom thou dost expect to receive something more than thou hast given, not in money only, but anything, whether it be wheat, or wine, or oil, or whatever else you please, if you expect to receive more than you have given, you are a usurer, and in this particular are not deserving of praise, but of

[15] *St. Hilarii Episcopi Tractatus Psalmi XIV,* in Migne, *Patr. Lat.,* Vol. IX, p. 307: "Sed tendit usque ad consummationem perfectam admonitio coelestis . . . Quid enim tam intolerabile, quam ut indigenti ita beneficium tribuas ut magis egeat, et miseriam inopis opem laturus accumules? Si Christianus es, quid a Deo praemii expectas, ipse ab hominibus non beneficia expectando, se damna? Si Christianus es, quid otiosam pecuniam tuam in reditum componis, et fratris tui inopiam pro suo Christus mortuus est, thesaurum tuum efficis?"

censure. . . . 'What then,' you say, 'am I to do, that I may lend profitably?' Consider what the usurer does. He undoubtedly desires to give a smaller sum, and to receive a larger; do thou this also; give thou a little, receive much. Give things temporal, receive things eternal." [16]

A large portion of this passage by St. Augustine was incorporated into the Canon Law, together with two similar attacks on usury written respectively by St. Jerome (his commentary on Ezekiel, Ch. XVIII), and St. Ambrose (*De Nabuthe*). These three passages deal with usury practised by laymen, and they are considered so important that they form three successive chapters in the Canon Law, namely, in the Decretals, Part II, Causa XIV, Question III.[17]

An official pronouncement about lending money on interest is contained in Canon 20 of the Church Council held at Elmira about the year 300. The first part, which condemns the practice on the part of any member of the clergy, became a part of the Canon Law.[18] The second part refers to laymen. It reads thus: "If any layman has accepted usury and promises, after having been reprimanded, that he will desist from further acts of this kind, he will receive absolution; if, on the other hand, he continues in this practice, let it be decided that he will be ejected from the Church." [19]

The famous Church Council of Nicea also took up the question of usury, and it condemned the practice so severely that if anyone among the clergy were to be found guilty in the future of exacting interest on money loaned at twelve or eighteen per cent a year, "he shall be deposed from the clergy and his name stricken from the list." Although the canon mentions only these two forms of usury,

[16] The above translation is from *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* ed. by Ph. Schaff, Vol. VIII, *Saint Augustin, Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (New York, 1888), Psalm XXXVII, p. 99. This is Psalm XXXVI in the Catholic Bible.

[17] See A. Friedberg, *Corpus Iuris Canonici,* Vol. I (Leipzig, 1879), p. 735. Other extracts from St. Augustine and other Fathers were also taken over, as indicated by R. Kaulla, "Der Wertbegriff im römischen Recht," in *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft,* Vol. LVIII (1901), pp. 429-430.

[18] See the *Decretals* by Gratian, Dist. XLVII, Ch. 5.

[19] See Ch. J. Hefele, *Histoire des conciles,* Vol. I, Part I (Paris, 1907), pp. 232-233: "Si quis clericorum detectus fuerit usuras accipere, placuit eum degradari et abstineri. Si quis etiam laicus accepisse probatur usuras, et promiserit correptus jam se cessaturum, nec ulterius exacturum, placuit et veniam tribui; si vero in ea iniquitate duraverit, ab ecclesia esse projiciendum."

it also contains these words, "Or by using any other contrivance whatever for filthy lucre's sake." Consequently, the outstanding commentators have declared that "every kind of usury is forbidden to clerics and under any circumstances." The Canon Law contains the passages quoted above in two versions.[20]

It will be seen, then, that the name *usury* was applied to every form of interest exacted on money loaned to anyone. The ancient world was not familiar with conditions such as have prevailed since the close of the Middle Ages. It is for this reason that most authorities in the field of economics do not speak of capitalism until we have reached the fifteenth century. Again, since capitalism developed side by side with Protestantism, it has frequently been argued that Protestantism was partly or largely responsible for the rise of capitalism.

The medieval Church, notwithstanding the warnings of Augustine and other Fathers against the acquisition of temporal possessions by the clergy, constantly increased its stake in the world. When the Roman Empire withdrew its legions from the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, and when hordes of barbarians roamed over the estates of high and low in western and southern Europe, a great stabilizing power was urgently needed to restore order and maintain at least a semblance of political authority. The government of the decadent empire was no longer in a position to render this service. The political institutions of the Germanic tribes were incapable of coping with the situation. Consequently it fell to the lot of the Church to rescue from the hands of the invaders the priceless treasures of classical antiquity, to open new schools, to institute law courts, and to regulate the social life of the distracted citizens of the Roman world.

In the course of ten centuries (300-1300) the Church became exceedingly wealthy, acquiring from one-fifth to one-third of the

[20] See the excellent translation of Canon XVII of the Council of Nicea in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. XIV (New York, London, Oxford, 1900), pp. 36-38. The reader, however, is cautioned not to accept the very erroneous interpretation of Calvin's theory on usury: "The glory of inventing the new moral code on the subject, by which that which before was looked upon as mortal sin has been transfigured into innocence, if not virtue, belongs to John Calvin! He made the modern distinction between 'interest' and 'usury.' " The editor shows that he had never thoroughly studied Calvin's works. See our Ch. III.

landed property in western Europe. Its hand never relaxed the hold it had upon the property once donated to it; that hand was like the hand of a dead man. For this reason the English government passed an act in the year 1279 which it appropriately called the Mortmain, that is, the hand of the dead (person). Its intention was to permit no more donations to be made to the Church without its permission. For not only did the Church derive immense economic and political power from the fact that in a sense it had succeeded the government of the Roman Empire, but it also acquired additional property and prestige through the thousands of bequests left by devout members, who reasoned that, since they could take nothing with them to heaven, they might as well leave their property in the hands of clergymen, who could be of great advantage to them after they had passed through the portals of death. Masses could be read for them and prayers could be said for them, which would reduce the length of their stay in purgatory.

The property of the Church was not private property, but the management of vast estates gave the higher clergy much knowledge about affairs. The Church militant was definitely in this world. Ascetics might flee the world and retire to cells or to huts in the wilderness, mystics might spend all their energy in trying to unite their individual souls with the divine soul or spirit, but the Church maintained its great hierarchy, ruled its immense domains, levied taxes upon all laymen, and exercised political dominion as well. It would seem, therefore, that Protestant writers who concentrate their attention upon the asceticism of the medieval Church, should balance their findings with facts gleaned from a careful study of the government of the medieval Church.

The same observation could very well be made regarding the Church in the Byzantine, or East Roman, Empire, which continued the work of the great builders of commerce and industry in the former Roman Empire. One English authority has said with some justification that the history of the Byzantine Empire was fundamentally the "history of her financial policy and of the commerce of the Middle Ages." [21] While Rome was sacked and partly destroyed by Visigoths, Ostrogoths and Lombards, while Sicily was seized by the Saracens, while Gaul and the Low Countries were

[21] S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation* (1933), p. 163.

ravaged by the Northmen, Constantinople remained unharmed, and perpetuated the high level of trade and industry attained under such emperors as Hadrian and Trajan. Moreover, when commerce in the west languished, partly because the Church prohibited the lending of money on interest, the government of the Byzantine Empire permitted the following rates of interest: four per cent to the rich, six per cent to ordinary persons, eight per cent to professional money-lenders, and twelve per cent on transmarine enterprises. By charging a uniform import and export duty on all goods shipped in and out of Constantinople, the government insured for itself a steady revenue, and thus could maintain an adequate naval and military force with which to protect trade.

Very remarkable was the manner in which the imperial government at Constantinople manipulated the various mercantile and craft corporations. The latter bodies bought raw materials and divided them among their members, who sold the finished products in a public place, and derived a profit stipulated by the office of the Prefect. This individual was in charge of all the corporations, or guilds. His task was to regulate the industries within the city so that middlemen were not required, food prices were kept down, and unemployment reduced to the vanishing point. Those who were without work, were given jobs either by the government or by charitable organizations. Joint-stock companies were formed to protect shipowners against pirates and to save shipping costs. Banks flourished under the supervision of the Prefect, and the gold standard was maintained for at least six hundred years. Much of this is ignored by those writers of history who forget that Constantinople had banks and a gold standard long before these were supposedly originated by the Italians. Lending of money on interest was also an old custom in Constantinople when in western Europe it was beginning to be introduced in violation of the Canon Law. Protestantism did not start much of an innovation in these fields, as will be indicated presently.

However, the injunctions in Psalm XV (XIV), Ezekiel XVIII, and the Sermon on the Mount, together with the statement by Aristotle that money does not beget money, dominated the financial policies of the governments of western Europe which supported the claims of the Roman bishop to supremacy in the Christian Church.

Charlemagne and his immediate successors followed the Council of Elvira in condemning what was called usury. Their condemnation also applied to the widely used custom of lending money on crops stored in the fall of the year, to be thus held for higher prices expected the following spring. Sometimes the interest was paid in the form of grain.[22] The prohibition was intended to prevent moral wrong-doing, and it did not rest on judicial grounds, that is, juridical arguments were not yet advanced. Charlemagne and his successors, closely allied as they were with the head of the Church in Rome, followed the same line of reasoning as that expressed by the leading Church Fathers and the clergy assembled in the Council of Elvira.

All the church councils held in the western church during the eleventh century continued the prohibition expressed previously; and finally, also the Second Lateran Council held in Rome (1139), repeated the old injunctions. About the same time as the Second Council of the Lateran, Gratian included in his Decretals, that is, the first part of the Canon Law, the famous prohibition against the lending of money on interest which naturally was considered the final authority for all members of the Church and also for the great scholastic writers, including Thomas Aquinas.[23]

In the period of the Crusades, however, practical considerations often led to actions which were not in keeping with the words of the Canon Law and the Church Fathers. Closer contact with Constantinople also drove an ever-deepening wedge between theory and practice. Led by the Italian merchants, the business men of all western countries began to talk more and more about the theory of a just price, which was the price they could reasonably ask for their goods when consideration was given to the amount of time they spent and the risks they had to take. Gradually the principles of law and equity assumed their proper place beside moral and religious requirements. When capital was needed to increase the stock of a merchant, and when he made a decent profit with the money borrowed, it seemed only logical and fair that both parties concerned in the loan should share in the profit thus acquired. On the other

[22] F. Schaub, *Der Kampf gegen den Zinswucher, ungerechten Preis und unlauteren Handel im Mittelalter von Karl dem Grossen bis Papst Alexander III* (Freiburg in Br., 1905), p. 71.

[23] F. Schaub, *l.c., pp.* 121-138.

hand, monopolies, or trusts, which engineered the artificial rise in prices, and all manner of unjust profit were still generally condemned by clergy and laymen as deceit and robbery. The real meaning of the old word *usury* was applied in practice to the latter evils, and the word *interest* was introduced to indicate the essential difference between the former significance of usury and the later connotation, as we shall observe in Chs. II and III.

The height of scholasticism in the thirteenth century coincides with the rapid growth of commerce and industry in Italy, France, Germany, the Low Countries and Spain. As the cities attract the serfs who are dissatisfied with their many obligations in the rural districts, as services owing to the lords are transmuted into money payments, and as military services formerly rendered by vassals to their respective lords also are turned into money payments, it becomes impossible for the authorities in the Church to keep the business world chained and strangled by wornout regulations concerning the use of capital. The theologians, it is true, will not easily yield the point, nor will the lawyers adjust themselves so readily to a new régime. But all the time the cities expand, capital in ever-growing streams flows through the newly dug channels of trade and industry, and the business men express less and less concern over the pronouncements of learned doctors and pious clergymen.

A fascinating picture of the rapid expansion in the industrial world of Italy during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from the pen of a distinguished authority shows the reader how little relation there was between the official verdict of the theologians and lawyers on the one hand and the business world on the other hand.[24] This picture deals with realities. It indicates how serfdom and feudalism fled before the advancing hosts of trade and industry, how the cities grew with almost unbelievable rapidity, how new markets shot out of the ground, as it were, and how old traditions vanished as if by magic. It might be well for those Protestant critics who see too close a relation between Protestantism and capitalism, and who believe that Catholicism is necessarily accompanied by industrial and commercial apathy, to study this remarkable renaissance of economic life in Italy shortly after the inception of the Crusades. The almost superhuman energy displayed by the merchants of Genoa and

[24] A. Doren, *Italienische Wirtschaftsgeschichte,* Vol. I(Jena, 1934), pp. 146-301.

Venice would seem to prove that geographical and other secular forces, such as those which in recent years have brought Japan to the front rank of the great commercial powers, have been more vital than imaginary spiritual or religious factors.[25]

The famous banks of Florence, Genoa and Venice were as necessary and as inevitable in the economic development of Italy in the later Middle Ages as was the cotton gin in North America when the demand for it resulted in its creation. However, the Christian religion was too strongly imbedded in the hearts of the Italians, the French, the Germans and the Flemings to permit them to break completely and suddenly with the words to be found in the Bible and in the Canon Law, not to mention the many statements by the leading Church Fathers. So they sought and found a way of compromise, and a rather hypocritical evasion of the letter of the law. In learned treatises the friends of the business men tried to convince their patrons and the general public that to take interst was not to take interest.

Before examining these ingenious arguments of the clever writers who sought to justify a necessary evil, we must analyze the verdict of the leading scholastic theologian, Thomas Aquinas, who in two of his famous works laid down rules which were of the greatest importance, owing to his enormous prestige as the angelic doctor. The most widely quoted passages appear in the *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa Theologica,* which may be considered the most profound literary production of the Middle Ages.

Questions 77 and 78 are both devoted to the problem of trade, just profit in making sales, interest loaned on money, and the use that can be made of profits which exceed one's own needs. The author first explains at some length that to sell an article for more than its value is obviously a crime, but a person who sells it for more than he paid for it, may or may not be guilty of fraud. This problem of the just price was widely discussed by the scholastic philosophers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,[26] and it is ably analyzed

[25] See especially the excellent work by A. Fanfani, *Le origini dello spirito capitalistico in Italia* (Milan, 1933).

[26] An excellent discussion of this question is to be found in J. B. Kraus, *Scholastik, Puritanismus und Kapitalismus* (Munich and Leipzig, 1930), Ch. II, which is entitled, "Die charakteristische Lehre vom gerechten Preise." See also H. Brey, *Hochscholastik und 'Geist' des Kapitalismus* (Munich dissertation, Borna-Leipzig, 1927), pp. 64-69.

here. "Buying and selling is an institution, or practice, intended for the mutual advantage of the two parties concerned. That which is to bring both profit, must not place a heavier burden upon the one than upon the other. Consequently, the contracts between the two are to contain the idea of equality of opportunity. But since the value of a certain article which is introduced into use among men is measured by the price indicated, for money was invented for this purpose, the equality demanded by justice cannot exist where either the price exceeds the value or the value exceeds the price." [27]

How is one to determine what constitutes a just price? "The just price is not a definitely stated figure, but it is dependent upon estimated values, to be computed in such manner that the equality of justice is not disturbed." [28] Various deceitful practices in buying and selling are outlined next. But in spite of all those evils which accompany trade in this world, commerce in itself is laudable. Money, which is the end of the business deal, must not be considered evil. "There is nothing to be said against using money to put through some honest or necessary transaction. Thus one may employ the moderate amount of money gained to maintain one's domestic establishment, or to support those who are in need. It may also be that one could do something for the general welfare." [29]

Usury is fully discussed in Question 78. First seven arguments are presented which were being used by those who wished to justify the custom of lending money on interest. The first is based upon Luke XIX, 23: "Wherefore then did you not put my money into a bank, in order that I might have received it back with usury (interest)?" The second quotes Deut. XXIII, 20: "Unto a stranger you may lend upon usury." The third refers to laws passed by civil governments, which makes it proper to lend money on interest. The

[27] *Summa theologica,* 2, 2, qu. 77, art. 1: "Emptio et venditio videtur esse introducta pro communi utilitate utriusque . . . Quod autem pro communi utilitate est inductum, non debet magis in gravamen unius quam alterius. Et ideo debet secundum aequalitatem rei inter eos contractus institui. Quantitas autem rerum quae in usum hominis veniunt mensuratur secundum pretium datum; ad quod est inventum numisma . . . Et ideo si vel pretium excedat quantitatem valoris rei, vel e converso res excedat pretium, tolletur iustitiae aequalitas." See Th. Aquinas, *Opera omnia,* iussu edita Leonis XIII P.M., Vol. IX (Rome, 1897), p. 147.

[28] *Opera,* IX, p. 148: "Quod ideo dico quia iustum pretium rerum quandoque non est punctualiter determinatum, sed magis in quadam aestimatione consistit."

[29] Question 77, article 4; *Opera,* IX, pp. 153-154.

fourth is rather feeble, saying that to pass over a commandment is not sin. According to Luke VI, 35, one must give without expecting to receive anything back. To refrain from doing a noble thing is not necessarily to commit sin. The fifth, sixth and seventh arguments are both feeble and vague.

Aquinas responds to these arguments in reasoning that to receive money as interest is unjust, for it amounts to selling something that does not exist. Money was invented, so says Aristotle in two of his works (*Ethics* V, Ch. V; and *Politics* I, Ch. III), in order to enable people to exchange products. Accepting money for the use of money is therefore unlawful. To the first argument itself the author replies that the text refers to superabundant spiritual gifts, not to actual money put into a bank. To the second, that everybody is our neighbor and brother, and according to the same chapter in Deut. it is not permissible to charge interest of a brother. To the third, that some civil governments have indeed permitted sinful practices because of the imperfect conditions prevailing in society, as in the *Corpus Juris Civilis* (Institut. II, IV, *De usufructu;* see also Dig. VII, V: *De usufruct, earum rer.,* 1,2). To the fourth, that we must indeed do good, not in order to receive a reward from men but from God.

The second article again produces seven arguments which seem to favor usury. Once more, however, the writer picks the evidence to pieces. Six other arguments are disposed of likewise in the third and fourth articles. It is clear that here we see a scholar at work who is familiar with the atmosphere of the business world, but remains faithful to the Bible. Moreover, he repeatedly goes back to Aristotle, whom he calls the Philosopher, for it seems almost to Aquinas as if that writer had foreseen the intricate relations between various commercial and industrial establishments.[30] In the 83rd question of the *Summa Theologica* he talks in a similar vein when discussing the Lord's Prayer, in which occurs this statement, "Give us this day our daily bread." He obviously does not favor the view as expressed in the four arguments he quotes that one should not ask for temporal possessions. But he argues that one must be careful not to become

[30] This has been fully indicated by E. Schreiber in his excellent work, *Die volkswirtschaftlichen Anschauungen der Scholastik seit Thomas von Aquin* (Jena, 1913), pp. 66-94.

too much attached to them, nor to seek more than is necessary for a modest living.[31]

Almost identical are the views expressed by the writer in another work, the *Summa contra Gentiles,* where he says: "External riches are necessary to the acquisition of virtue, in order that we may therewith sustain our bodies and help others.[32] The thought did not trouble him, as it was to trouble thousands of Puritans afterward, that the acquisition of considerable temporal wealth was a dangerous thing for everybody. Aquinas felt with most of the later scholastic writers that if a person had been brought up in wealthy surroundings or with honest labor amassed riches, he would do much good with his possessions, without depriving himself of all but a small portion of them.

Perhaps it will seem inconsistent in Aquinas that he, the revered saint in the Roman Catholic Church, entertained views on the Eighth Commandment which were very liberal. He argued that the gifts of nature belong to all mankind as a whole, and that division of property, or redistribution of property does not solve the problem of wealth and poverty. But in case one person has an abundance of this world's goods, part of his possessions really belong to the poor. This is the reason why Ambrose has said, "The bread of the hungry you have preserved for yourself, and the clothes of the naked you have locked up. And the money that you have buried in the ground, is the deliverance of the unfortunate." Since many are suffering want, it is not possible, however, for one person to help them all. He is to decide for himself how many he can and should relieve. When the need of a certain article is extremely great, especially in case death may be the result of the deprivation, one may either openly or secretly take something from another person. Such action is not of the nature of theft or robbery.[33]

[31] See Article 6: "Temporalia autem licet desiderare: non quidem principaliter, ut in eis finem constituamus; sed sicut quaedam adminicula quibus adiuvamur ad tendendum in beatitudinem, inquantum scilicet per ea vita corporalis sustentatur, et inquantum nobis organice deserviunt ad actus virtutum, ut etiam Philosophus dicit in I *Ethic.*" So we see that even when interpreting a passage from the Lord's Prayer, Thomas still refers to the great Greek philosopher.

[32] Th. Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles,* Book I, Part III, Ch. 134: "Exteriores divitiae sunt necessariae ad bonum virtutis, cum per eas sustentemus corpus et aliis subveniamus."

[33] *Summa theologica,* 2, 2, Qu. LXVI, Art. VII.: "Tunc licite potest aliquis ex rebus

This statement from the pen of the angelic doctor is significant, for it represents the official viewpoint of the Roman Catholic clergy. Those who in the spring of 1937 used to listen to some of the radio addresses of Father Coughlin, may have wondered where he got the authority to say in one of the children's hours that "To take something from another person when the latter is unreasonably unwilling to part with it, is not theft." The speaker was well aware of what he was doing in this case, and in subsequent chapters we shall have occasion to observe what the Protestants thought of this definition of theft. Aquinas reveals here an attitude which differed considerably from that adopted by St. Francis, the founder of the Franciscans, the order which frequently opposed the Dominicans (to whom Aquinas belonged). It differed likewise from the essential principle of Puritanism, as will appear.

St. Francis, in his *First Rule of the Friars Minor,* left instructions concerning poverty and almsgiving from which a few passages are reproduced here: "And when men may treat them with contempt, and refuse to give them alms, let them give thanks for this to God, because for these shames they shall receive great honor before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . And whenever a necessity shall arise, it is lawful for all the brothers, wherever they may be, to eat of all food that men can eat, as our Lord said of David, who 'did eat the loaves of proposition, which was not lawful to eat but for the priests.' . . . And in like manner in time of manifest necessity let all the brothers act in their needs, as our Lord shall give them grace, for necessity has no law."[34] These words could be construed in various ways, but it is unlikely that St. Francis approved of forcefully taking food or anything else from another person. During the Black Death, thousands of Franciscans gave up their lives in trying to aid the victims of the dreaded pestilence, and there is no doubt that these earnest Christians counted physical death in such service a gain. In short, the scholastic writers were only a part of the members of the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, wherefore one cannot judge the whole Church by what the scholastic theologians alone had to say.

alienis suae necessitate subvenire, sive manifeste sive occulte sublatis. Nec hoc proprie habet rationem furti vel rapinae."

[34] *The Writings of Saint Francis of Assisi,* ed. Father P. Robinson (Philadelphia, 1906), pp. 43-44.

Some of the scholastic writers were even more interested than Aquinas in the secular factors which determined the theory of the just price, proper wages and just profits.[35] The question of expenses involved in the act of purchasing and storing the goods which are put up for resale, as well as the particular need of the person who decides to become the consumer are carefully weighed.[36]

The general consideration of the public welfare is also thoroughly treated by the later scholastic writers, especially by Duns Scotus and Buridan. The latter, who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century, based the just price largely upon the need of the consumer. His pupil, Oresmius (Oresme), is said to have arrived at the most advanced views of the just price.[37] He made a distinction between the general market price and the particular deviations from the general price level occasioned in each case by the needs of the individual consumer. Thomas Aquinas had already made such a distinction, but he had not done very much with it. The same is true of Duns Scotus. Henry of Gent, on the other hand, insisted on an absolute average, which was to be firmly established by a number of written contracts.[38]

It is refreshing to find the enlightening discussion of the difficult problems brought up by Aquinas in the pages of the later scholastics, for too much has been said recently about the "big jump" between the angelic doctor of the thirteenth century and the scholastic writers who flourished at the end of the Middle Ages, and were therefore privileged to gaze with admiration upon the "dawn of modern

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[35] H. Brey, *l.c.*, pp. 64-74.

[36] See J. B. Kraus, *l.c.*, pp. 48-52; E. Schreiber, *l.c.*, pp. 161-193. See also the scholastic writers themselves, mentioned below.

[37] R. Kaulla, "Der Lehrer des Oresmius (Buridanus)," in *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft*, Vol. LX (1904), pp. 453-454; E. Bridrey, *La théorie de la monnaie au XIV e siècle, Nicole Oresme* (Paris, 1906), pp. 302-303; E. Schreiber, *l.c.*, pp. 177-193.

[38] H. Brey, *Hochscholastik und 'Geist' des Kapitalismus* (Leipzig, 1927), pp. 64-69. Oresme's advanced view on usury is seen in these words: "Usurarius vero tradidit pecuniam suam ei qui recipit voluntarie et qui postea potest ex ea se juvare ac inde suae necessitati succurrere, et illud quod dat alteri ultra sortem est ex contractu voluntario inter partes." See his *Tractatus de origine, natura, jure et mutationibus monetarum*, Ch. XVII. The Latin original and a French translation is to be found in *Traictie de la première invention des monnoies de Nicole Oresme*, ed. M. L. Wolowski (Paris, 1864), pp. LII, CXVIII. See also E. Bridrey, *La théorie*, pp. 201-208. An excellent treatment of Henry of Ghent is E. Schreiber, *l.c.*, pp. 131-139.

civilization." Enlightened opinions by Gerson, Buridan, Oresme, Henry of Ghent, Gabriel Biel and Antonine of Florence have at last been properly elucidated by competent scholars.[39]

Especially noteworthy for the fourteenth century are the remarks about the just price by John Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, who distinguished the following factors: the qualities, usefulness, or goodness of the article; the rarity or scarcity of the article; and the subjective value as determined by the needs and opinion of the consumer. Gerson also appreciated the importance of the number of buyers available and the types of sellers. The time, the place and the personalities all enter into the final evaluation of the article that is put up for sale. This may be regulated and settled definitely by the laws of the local or national governments, as is pointed out by Gerson: "The lawgiver must consider fully the needs of the consumer, the relative scarcitiy of the product, the expenses incurred in getting the product into the hands of the buyer, and the original expense of production. . . . The individual is not wiser than the government. Consequently it is the duty of the state to fix just prices, which may not be altered by private persons, and must be protected by law." [40]

One must not assume that there is a gradual and general breaking away from the theories of Thomas Aquinas until the period of the Reformation is reached. On the contrary, so late a writer as Biel (d. 1495) copied much from Buridan and Oresme, and he appears to have been less profound in his understanding of the most difficult

[39] J. B. Kraus, *l.c.*, pp. 53-57; W. Endemann, *Die nationalökonomischen Ansichten und Lehren der Kanonisten* (1863); K. Ilgner, *Die volkswirtschaftlichen Anschauungen Antonins von Florenz* (Paderborn, 1904); W. Endemann, *Studien in der romanischen-kanonistischen Wirtschafts-und Rechtslehre,* Vol. II, (1883); G. O'Brien, *An Essay on Mediaeval Economic Teaching* (London, 1920), pp. 196-221; E. Schreiber, *l.c.,* pp. 125-226.

[40] J. Gerson, *De contractibus,* Consideratio XIX: "Iusta lege potest institui precium rerum venabilium tam mobilium quam immobilium . . . Cum itaque precium sit in contractibus tanquam medium adequativum: et difficile sit tale medium semper inveniri propter affectiones varias et corruptas hominum: prorsus expediens est ut illud medium capiatur prout sapiens iudicabit: sicut loquitur Aristoteles, *De medio virtutis.* Nullus autem debet censeri sapientior quam legislator." See the *Opera* of Gerson (Paris, 1521), Vol. I, fol. 198 verso. It is curious that Dr. J. L. Connelly, the author of the admirable biography of Gerson, published at Louvain in 1928 (*John Gerson Reformer and Mystic*), could find no space in his extensive work for this important treatise of Gerson. Some minor pieces, never published, receive due attention, but nothing is said about the contribution of Gerson to the economic theories of the time.

economic problems than was Buridan or Oresme. In one respect at least it is well to consider Buridan again, namely, in our quest for the origins of the doctrine which lent approval to the consumption and acquisition of luxuries. This very marked deviation from Aquinas by Buridan indicates that not all philosophers of the fourteenth century felt bound to follow in the footsteps of Aristotle and Aquinas. People had asked Buridan, he said, why certain products were sold at exorbitant prices, so that the poor could not possibly procure any of them. Buridan replied that this was as it should be, for the price of a product did not simply depend upon the need of the general public but it corresponded to the need, or demand, of the rich whenever the product was beyond the reach of the poorer classes. Buridan rcognized the propriety of having luxuries put up for sale and brought into circulation, which step is of considerable historical significance. Thomas Aquinas, and his teacher, Albert Magnus, were Dominican friars and as such they bitterly opposed the consumption of luxuries. Even Luther and Calvin frequently warned against the desire for unnecessary articles of clothing, or expensive foods and beverages.

Buridan also distinguished himself for his theories about the value of money. It was a widely accepted view, he stated, that governments had the right to change the value of money, and accordingly, the price of goods depended upon the amount of gold or silver in the coins put into circulation by the government. Aristotle had said that money did not derive its inherent value from the law of nature but from the law made by the civil government. Consequently, money might thus be rendered without value altogether. But, so argued Buridan, this is going altogether too far, in spite of what Aristotle had said. A king was not omnipotent, and the value of gold and silver coins was affected partly by the amount of precious metals used by the rich in their ornaments. In short, money could go up or down in value in accordance with the law of supply and demand. Oresmius continued in the same manner, and in his explanation of the relative value of gold and silver he pointed out that gold was scarcer, and that it cost more to produce it.[41] Such bold deviation from Aristotle was rare among the scholastic philosophers.

Another field in which both Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas were

[41] R. Kaulla, *l.c.*, pp. 454-458; E. Schreiber, *l.c.*, pp. 177-191.

regarded with doubt by some of the later scholastic writers was the reputation which commerce and industry had enjoyed among the Church Fathers, the classical authorities and the apostles. Aquinas, as we saw, approved of commerce on a limited scale in case the merchant sought an honest and legitimate gain, part of which he intended to use in affording relief for the poor. Scholasticism in general looked with disfavor upon commerce and industry, exactly as the Church Fathers and the classical writers had done. Duns Scotus, on the other hand, regarded the industrious merchant with unfeigned admiration. In view of the hard work he does, the risk he takes and the quality of his labor, he is entitled to a fairly high income.[42] Even more encouragement to "big business" is shown by Antonine of Florence, who readily grants that the merchant must have his "moderate profit." [43]

Gabriel Biel, who is usually referred to as the last of the scholastic philosophers, also discussed similar problems. He wrote a book entitled, *Repertorium on the Four Books of Sentences,* in which he elucidated the problem of the just price. One passage reads thus: "When once the price has been fixed, the contracting parties have sufficient assurance about the value of the products concerned and the justice of the price." Another philosopher, Caepolla, wrote, "When the price has been laid down by law or statute, that is the right price, and no one dare take any more for his products, for the law must be obeyed." [44] These propositions remind us very much of the attempts of the mercantilists in the seventeenth century, who sought to have the national governments control trade and industry. They also sound familiar to the student of American history who has followed the recent attempts of the government to fix maximum or minimum prices in this country. We shall observe presently that the early Protestants followed the same line of reasoning as the later scholastics, arguing that whatever the government commanded

[42] Duns Scotus, *Sententiae,* Book IV, Dist. XV, qu. 2. See *Joannis Duns Scoti doctoris subtilis Ordinis Minorum Opera omnia,* Vol. XI (Paris, 1894), p. 255. See also the commentary on usury in the same volume, p. 328.

[43] K. Ilgner, *Die volkswirtschaftlichen Anschauungen Antonins von Florenz,* pp. 151-152.

[44] J. B. Kraus, *l.c.,* p. 57. On Biel's theory about money, see *Treatise on the Power and Utility of Moneys by Master Gabriel Biel,* tr. R. B. Burke (Philadelphia, Pa., 1930).

in purely political, social, or economic matters was the law of the land, and as such it was to be obeyed.

W. Sombart has argued that the scholastic writers generally did not show a hostile attitude toward worldly affairs, and that they fully understood the great sociological and economic revolution which was developing before their very eyes: "They viewed capitalism with much more sympathy in their day than the Puritans did in the seventeenth century." [45] This is an interesting though somewhat hazardous statement, but since it comes from the pen of an internationally respected authority of the first rank, it is worthy of serious consideration. Bewildered as one gets by the conflict between the conservative writer who produces a long and scholarly biography of a man like John Gerson without mentioning Gerson's important treatise on Contracts, and the liberal writer who interprets Luther and Calvin too largely from a political or economic standpoint, one should welcome the conclusions drawn by experts in the field of economics which establish a logical relation between religious and economic theories. We may be able to modify Sombart's thesis in remarking that there was a difference of opinion among the scholastic philosophers, and that some favored a liberal interpretation of certain passages in the Bible and in the works of Aristotle.

On the other hand, it can be said in support of Sombart's contention that Cardinal Cajetan (d. 1489), the well-known commentator of the *Summa Theologica* by Thomas Aquinas, represented a viewpoint on capitalism which is indeed more friendly than that shown by John Calvin and many of his followers on the Continent as well as in England. In one of his commentaries, illuminating the question On Avarice, propounded by Aquinas, he remarked that the amount of wealth acquired by a person is not of any special importance, but rather his attachment to this wealth. It had been argued, he said, that no one could without committing sin accumulate more worldly possessions than he needed for himself in his particular place in the social order. This argument was false. It would mean that if one needed one thousand florins for his business or occupation, he would not be permitted to obtain four thousand or ten thousand. Moreover, he could not alter his position in the social world without committing sin. A peasant would always

[45] W. Sombart, *Der Bourgeois* (Munich and Leipzig, 1920), p. 315.

have to be a peasant, a laborer in some industry would always have to remain such a laborer, and a townsman always a townsman. Never could he buy himself some other occupation. Such a process of reasoning is manifestly absurd.[46]

It seems to me that the scholastic writers, like many other scholars, can be interpreted in various ways. The early Protestants, who desired to jump back over their heads to the time of the Church Fathers, did not realize of how much excellent Christian literature they deprived themselves. And modern commentators will do well to beware of hasty criticism, either of the earlier or of the later scholastic theologians. For example, Antonine of Florence, who has been mentioned above to indicate how progressive and liberal he was in his attitude toward the rising capitalism in Italy, remained faithful to the doctrines inculcated by the leading Church Fathers. Quoting from St. Augustine, as he did very frequently, he wrote on one occasion that the Christian religion was a religion of wealth. "For he who has God, possesses all the things that are of God." He argued that one should not confuse usury (lending of money on interest) with almsgiving, for no one had the right to practice usury with the poor. In his great *Summa Theologica,* or, *Summa Moralis,* he dwelt at length upon lending and borrowing, usury and robbery, clinging to the faith of his fathers.[47]

Antonine's whole attitude toward business dealings in general deserves serious study, for we shall see in it many symptoms present which are too frequently said to have been introduced by some of the early Protestants, though none of them was born when Antonine made his opinions known to the world, since his chief composition, just mentioned, was composed before 1450. The reader will presently recognize the same arguments when used by Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon and Zwingli; and in several cases he will be able to

[46] Th. Aquinas, *Summa theologica,* Secunda secundae, Qu. 118, Art. 1, Reply to Argument 1, followed by Cajetan's commentary on the same: "Mensura divitiarum est prout sunt necessariae ad vitam hominis secundum suam conditionem, ita quod in excessu suius mensurae consistit peccatum avaritiae. Nam falsum videtur hoc esse. Quia sequeretur quod nemo poset licite cumular sibi pecunias ut mutet statum quem habet in maiorem." See *Opera,* Vol. IX, p. 456. As for Sombart's views on the scholastics writers, he appears to have wrongly translated the word *accidia* in their writings (see H. Brey, *l.c.,* p. 62, note 4a), but I do not believe that this mistake of his caused him to make the bold statement mentioned above.

[47] See the Second Part, Title II, Chs. I-V.

trace these arguments back to the patristic or the early scholastic writers.

As archbishop of Florence (1446-1459), Antonine was closely in touch with both secular affairs and the generally accepted teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. He knew the Fathers well, and he had a wholesome respect for the Canon Law. At the same time he was in a sense a business man, for his duties as archbishop in the greatest center of the Italian textile industries made him aware of the needs of commerce and industry. To think of him, or of Cardinal Cajtan, as merely a schoolman, is to arrive at a false picture of a certain class of scholastic theologians; and it has usually been such a distorted picture that has led to mistaken views of Calvin's economic theories.

Antonine, in imitation of Thomas Aquinas, whom he frequently quotes, presents a very favorable exposition of commerce. Buying and selling, he avers, are useful: "The merchant assumes the burdens of toil, expenditures, and many dangers, in order to contribute to the common welfare." [48] All trade that is carried on without fraud is laudatory and blameless. "Although trade was the result of avarice at the beginning, and though Aristotle says that it contains in itself a defect, when it serves the avaricious person; nevertheless, it can be made into a respectable calling, in case, for example, one uses it in order to support one's family, and to aid the needy with the proceeds of a modest and just undertaking." [49] Here he almost copies the same words that were quoted from Aquinas above.

Antonine naturally praised the advantage derived from international trade: "This comprises all enterprise connected with buying and selling. It seeks all shores, aids in maintaining peace and the friendly intercourse with foreign nations, and renders the goods of private persons the common property of the world." [50] In other words, international trade brings the products from distant lands to the door of the merchant's shop. It enables peoples to understand each other better, and thus it increases general prosperity. How dif-

[48] *Summa theol.*, Part III, Title VIII, Ch. 2.
[49] *Summa theol.*, Part III, Title VIII, Ch. 1.
[50] *Summa theol.*, Part I, Title I, Ch. 3.

ferent does such reasoning sound from the interpretation of scholasticism current in our colleges and universities today!

Even to a greater degree than Gerson, does Antonine discuss numerous details which establish the proper price of goods bought and sold. He considers the following points: (1) usefulness, (2) scarcity, (3) the natural value, (4) the commonly accepted value, and (5) the exchange value.[51] He also discusses in many particulars the law of supply and demand, while the problem of expenditures incurred by merchants in buying their supplies and storing them, is carefully delineated.[52]

Other subjects studied by Antonine are the nature and history of money, the need and danger of credit, the profit derived from borrowing the capital of another, and the essence of usury. It is the latter point especially that merits our attention here. "Usury," wrote Antonine, "is the profit added to the principal as intended in advance in a compact, agreed upon mutually by the two parties." [53] This was the lending of money on interest, pure and simple. According to the author it was forbidden by (1) the Bible, especially Ezek. XVIII, Lev. XXV, and Luke VI; (2) the Canon Law, especially the canons of the Council of Cathage; (3) the implication of certain provisions in the civil laws, which presume that much is permitted there that is prohibited by God; and (4) natural law, to sell that which does not exist.[54]

However, the customary exceptions allowed in the fifteenth century, are duly noted by Antonine. Even as early as the thirteenth century, Aquinas had made allowance for such exceptions, called for by the "damage emerging" for the creditor, in case he did not get his money back on time, and so could not make use of it in paying his own debts; and the "profit prevented," when the creditor was deprived of the making of profit with his own money: *damnum emergens,* and *lucrum cessans.*[55]

[51] *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. 16.

[52] *Summa theol.,* Part III, Title VIII, Chs. 3, 4.

[53] *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. 6: "Quidquid sorti accedit praecedente intentione vel pacto." See also Part I, Title XIV, Ch. 4: "Lucrum ex mutuo principaliter intentum."

[54] *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. 6; Part III, Title III, Ch. 4; Part II, Title I, Ch. 7.

[55] Th. Aquinas, *Summa theol.,* II, II, Qu. LXXVIII, Art. 2, ad 1. See also Antonine's *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. VI.

Aquinas had reasoned, however, that "the lender cannot entertain an agreement for compensation through the fact that he makes no profit out of his money, because he must not sell that which he does not have as yet, and may be prevented in many ways from having." [56] On the other hand, he had made the observation that the creditor might suffer loss because of his loan, either by being deprived of what he has at the time of the loan, or by being prevented from obtaining what he is about to get through the use of his own money.[57] The difficult point, of course, was to determine the value of the profit which the creditor had nearly secured when the loan was due and was not paid by the debtor. Aquinas argued that a gain not yet made is worth less than one actually obtained, but he admitted that it was worth something.

Antonine agrees with Aristotle that "money does not of its own nature produce money." It is only the industry of the person who uses it that produces the profit. No one can sell that which he does not possess, namely, the profit made with money through the labor of the merchant who buys his wares with it.[58] "That an article which of its own nature can produce nothing is loaned and thus produces a profit to the lender, is against nature; for this profit appears to be nothing else than the fruit of the thing itself. Is an article worth more when profit is made with it than when it remains without fruit?"

It may be well to add here an explanation from a modern interpreter: "Usury, therefore, was prohibited in all cases. Many people at the present day think that the prohibition of usury was the same thing as the prohibition of interest. There could not be a greater mistake. While usury was in all circumstances condemned, interest was in every case allowed. . . . The measure of the damage was the

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[56] *Summa theologica,* Secunda Secundae, Qu. LXXVIII, Art. 4, ad 1.

[57] *Summa theol.,* II, II, Qu. LXII, Art. 4: "Videtur quod aliquis debeat restituere quod non abstulit. Ille enim qui damnum alicui infert tenetur damnum removere . . . Praeterea, ille qui detinet pecuniam creditoris ultra terminum praefixum, videtur eum damnificare in toto eo quod lucrari de pecunia posset."

[58] Antonine, *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. 6: "Pecunia enim inquantum pretium venalium, nullum confert lucrum, nisi per industriam utentis. Vendere ergo utilitatem provenientem ex pecunia per mercativam industriam ei, cui mutuata est, nihil est aliud quam vendere sibi industriam et actus suos."

difference between the lender's condition before the loan was made and after it had been repaid: *id quod interest.*" [59]

Thus the word *interest,* as we now use it, originated. *Id quod interest* means *that which is between;* and the difference between two values, as described above, was called the interest. The explanation just given needs another explanation, for it is evidently a Catholic apology, or defence, of the scholastic teaching on the subject, which certainly did not imply that "interest was in every case allowed." For example, Thomas Aquinas did not support what we would call loaning of money on interest. All that he was willing to approve of was the interest to be paid, in the form of damages done to the creditor, when the money loaned by him to the debtor was not repaid on time. No one was permitted to do what our banks and finance companies do, namely, to lend money to everybody who applies for a loan and to charge the same rate of interest on the loan, regardless of whether the borrower makes any profit with the loan or not. On the other hand, the theory of the sterility of money, as advanced by Aristotle, and perpetuated by the leading Church Fathers and scholastic writers, was not so stupid as many modern critics have recently alleged.

Antonine was of the opinion that when a loan was made on condition that no interest was to be paid, and when the debtor made more profit with it than he had expected and offered to share this profit with the creditor, such a practice was not to be considered usury, and was therefore allowable.[60] It can readily be seen that here a loophole was to be found by the business men of the fifteenth century who had to have money and credit, but did not wish to violate openly and directly the canonical prohibitions on the lending of money on interest.

Antonine also was aware of the law which stated that the money of minors entrusted to a certain guardian who made use of it, should bear interest at the rate of five per cent. He thinks well of the practice, for he argues that if the guardian were to pay nothing for the use of the money, he would not take proper care of it. Even if he should happen to make no profit with it, he must nevertheless be

[59] G. O'Brien, *An Essay on Mediaeval Economic Teaching* (London, New York, 1920), p. 184.

[60] *Summa theol.,* Part II, Title I, Ch. 7.

willing to pay the interest, for he used it in his own name and did with it what he pleased. When he does derive a reasonable profit from it, the ward may accept the interest. This practice is not considered usury by Antonine, because it is a provision of the civil laws current in his country, and the payment may be looked upon as the proper fee for the purchase of the use of the money involved.[61]

The conservatism thus displayed by Antonine and other scholastic writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is strengthened by their attitude toward the relation between capital and labor. Here they return also to the patristic authors. When in the next chapter we shall examine the views of Martin Luther, who professed to scorn scholastic theology, we shall nevertheless find him doing very much the same thing as his opponents had been doing continually, namely, to preserve the high moral and ethical standards raised by the Apostolic Church and the Church Fathers.

The vocation of each person is regarded by the leading scholastic philosophers in the light of God's Providence. It is a part of the divine plan, and it is the religious duty of a Christian, to perform his daily tasks as well as he can. Manual labor was a distinctive feature of the Benedictine rule and order. Every form of honest labor was recommended by Aquinas, and he reasoned that those who were primarily interested in the contemplative life, who wanted to become great mystics, could benefit tremendously from the bodily and mental exertions required by each particular vocation.[62]

Since God has placed everyone in a certain class, Aquinas and his numerous followers frowned upon any rash attempts to upset this arrangement in human society. On the other hand, even Aquinas himself grants that in exceptional cases it is permitted to rise above one's station in society.[63] Likewise, the rich can and must reduce their superabundance of wealth through almsgiving. In this manner the discrepancy between the very wealthy and the very poor will tend to disappear.

But there was one evil which did more than any other to disrupt the attempted equilibrium between rich and poor. That evil we have seen mentioned before. It was called *usury*. Innumerable sermons

[61] *Summa theol.*, Part II, Title I, Ch. 7.
[62] J. Haessle, *Das Arbeitsethos der Kirche* (Freiburg in Baden, 1923), p. 139.
[63] W. Sombart, *Der Bourgeois*, pp. 317-318.

were preached against it during the whole of the medieval period. The early Protestant ministers also inveighed against it. Many and varied were the stories told about the worst usurers who were suddenly abducted to hell, or were subjected to terrible torture, or lost their money over night.[64] The exhortations from pulpit orators and pamphleteers were duly supplemented by regulations from the government. Some of these have been mentioned above. The English government, among others, was even more strict than was the Canon Law, especially in the reign of Edward III (1327-1377).[65]

It must have seemed very strange to the devout members of the Western Church that, while the Canon Law and the writings of the scholastic philosophers and the sermons of their preachers unceasingly attacked the abuse of lending money on interest, the bankers of Florence and Augsburg openly violated the injunctions to be found in the law of the Church. Necessity had rendered a part of the Canon Law null and void for the "big fellows," but the preachers still harped on the old subject, as if there were now two sets of laws, one for the poor and one for the rich. This was, for example, the burden of thought in one of the most remarkable pieces of English literature, the *Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman,* composed during the second half of the fourteenth century.

Such a state of affairs could not last indefinitely, and it was perfectly natural that in Florence, where the Canon Law had perhaps been ignored more frequently by the bankers and merchants than anywhere else, a writer should have appeared who sought to explain how changes in the social and economic order had necessitated a modification of the age-old condemnation of big business and of lending money on interest. This writer was Antonine of Florence, who has been mentioned above. He was complemented by Bernard of Siena, also an Italian writer. Both men are classed among the medieval saints, so it may be gathered that they were extremely cautious in their expositions.

Bernard of Siena reasoned that every form of *usury,* even the lending of money on interest when it is deemed absolutely neces-

[64] G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages,* Vol. I (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 58-62, 86-87; *Life in Britain from the Conquest to the Reformation* (Cambridge, 1918), pp. 342-344; *A Mediaeval Garner* (London, 1910), pp. 212-215; 298.

[65] G. Unwin, *Finance and Trade under Edward III* (Manchester, 1918), pp. 114-117. It evaded the canonical prohibition in its own case by giving presents instead of interest.

sary, is sinful, since the violation of divine laws cannot prevent the evil deed from carrying evil consequences with it. Both the creditor and the debtor are corrupted by this form of usury. All manner of financial gain thus made is deemed highly reprehensible, and even when one lends money to the government, this act is sinful, unless the loan were made under compulsion. Nevertheless, a way was shown out of the difficulties which confronted the Italian business men of the fifteenth century. A distinction was made by Bernard between usury proper and the use of capital in legitimate channels of commerce and industry. Perhaps this process of reasoning may be deemed hypocritical. But Bernard knew very well what he was doing by upholding on the one hand the law of his Church and by permitting on the other hand the business men to borrow money in the form of voluntary loans, called *doni,* that is, gifts, or donations.[66]

Antonine reasoned in the same vein, averring that international trade, insurance and the building of new industries required new capital, which could lawfully be invested by various classes of people. Obviously, to buy shares in a joint-stock company was not lending money on interest, nor was it wrong to invest money in transport insurance. But one condition was made which shows how reluctant the writer was to make rash concessions to the new capitalistic spirit in Italy. Antonine insisted that the person who thus invested his money should participate in the enterprise with his labor as well as with his money, for otherwise he was still trying to make money with bare money. Moreover, he must also share in the risk undertaken, else he could not very well expect to get a part of the profit, when there was any: "There are nobles who do not wish to work, but place their money at the disposal of some merchant or finance company, expecting to receive each year a return which depends upon their discretion and which involves no risk of losing anything. Such a practice is plain usury." [67]

Frequently the law of the Church was evaded with impunity by adding the interest to the principal, and by dropping the term usury and using instead the word *interest.* One popular scheme of hiding the lending of money on interest was through fictitious buying and selling, which would add something to the principal borrowed by

[66] A. G. F. Howell, *S. Bernardino of Siena* (London, 1913), p. 256.

[67] K. Ilgner, *l.c.,* pp. 114-116; *S. Antonini Summa moralis,* Part II, Title I, Chs. 5, 6.

the debtor. Such fictitious buying and selling was named *baratti* by the crafty Italians, who were obliged to tread warily, for in their respective cities the prohibitions of the Canon Law were made a part of the municipal law, thus plainly revealing the power of the Church. The city of Florence, for example, took this step in the year 1394. Dante, who was familiar with the practice, consigns the guilty parties to the sea of pitch (*Divine Comedy,* Canto 21, 22).

The rates of interest varied greatly. The governments of prosperous cities, like Venice or Florence, were able to secure money at the low rates of from two to four per cent, while loans engaged in by merchants and owners of industries ranged from ten to over one hundred per cent, the rate depending upon the length of time the money was used, and the reliability and worth of the debtor. It is well known that some of the largest banking houses in Italy were ruined in the fourteenth century when the English and French governments failed to pay their debts to them.[68]

While the Italian merchants made use of "usury" only as a means to a greater end, and as a matter of secondary importance, the so-called Lombards, who loaned money at high rates of interest in foreign countries, made it their regular business and their sole source of income. Although they were hated and detested by their patrons generally, they were indispensable, and hence tolerated as a necessary evil. Sometimes, however, when their rates seemed most excessive, they were imprisoned or banished.[69] The Jews gradually began to compete with the "Lombards" and were usually treated in the same manner. Their establishments closely resembled the institutions which in this country are conducted under the name of "Finance Companies."

Both Lombards and Jews had to fight a long and arduous battle with the so-called *Montes pietatis,* that is, "Mountains of Piety," which in the long run attained the victory in many districts, being supported and often conducted by the local governments, and intended simply to succor the poor. These official institutions sometimes offered loans without interest on small sums, and

[68] G. Unwin, *l.c.,* p. 131; A. Beardwood, *Alien Merchants in England 1350-1377* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931); A. Sapori, *La crisi delle Compagnie mercantili dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi* (Florence, 1926).

[69] A. Doren, *l.c.,* p. 463.

charged very low rates on larger amounts, so as to defray expenses if possible.[70] We shall hear more about these institutions in another chapter.

It appears that near the close of the Middle Ages the commercial revolution which accompanied the great geographical discoveries, upset the whole social and economic fabric of western Europe in such measure that neither the authority of Aquinas and Aristotle, nor the prohibitions of the Canon Law were able to prevent the inevitable metamorphosis. Much had happened previously to undermine the temporal power of the Church in the West. The papacy at Avignon, where in only one year (1328), five archbishops, thirty bishops and forty-six abbots were excommunicated for not having paid interest (called rents) on loans, or on benefices; the notorious Papal Schism (1378-1417), which had brought division and quarreling to all sections of the Church; and the new spirit of Mammon worship jointly broke asunder the fetters which had bound commerce and industry with unbearable shackles. Moreover, the Peasants' War in England (1381), repeated social upheavals in Flanders, the ravages caused by the Hundred Years' War in France (1337-1453), the dislocation of the old trade routes with the resultant impoverishment—these and many other factors contributed to the transition which marked the dividing line between medieval and modern civilization.

As early as 1425, Pope Martin V modified the canonical prohibition on the lending of money on interest by members of the clergy. He authorised rates from seven to ten per cent interest on real estate holdings (*bona stabilia*).[71] His decision was confirmed in 1455 by Pope Calixtus III.[72] It should be noted, however, that in the documents neither the word usury, nor interest, is used, but *census,* or rent. Nevertheless, many jurists interpreted the papal

[70] H. Holzapfel, *Die Anfänge der Montes pietatis* (Munich, 1903).

[71] See *Corpus Iuris Canonici,* ed. A. Friedberg, Vol. II (1881), col. 1269-1271. On col. 1270 appear these words: "Super bonis suis, dominiis, oppidis, terris, agris, praediis, domibus et hereditatibus vendere consuevit, et vendidit annuos unius vel plurum marcarum, aut grossorum Pragensium nummi polomaei et pagamenti consueti, ad rationem et pro qualibet marca census X. XI. XIII. XIV. marcae, aut plus vel minus, secundum temporis qualitatem, prout ipsi contrahentes tunc inter se convenerant."

[72] *Corpus Iuris Canonici,* Extrav. comm., Lib. III, Tit. V, cap. 2. (ed. A. Friedberg, II, col. 1271-1272). No rate is specified here, but merely this phrase is used: "Certum competens pretium in numerata pecunia secundum temporis qualitatem."

decrees so as to mean that interest was thereby permitted on money loaned by the clergy to others.[73]

Even the pope himself used to borrow money on interest long before the fifteenth century. For example, in 1262 we find the pope writing a letter to the bishop of Ely, in which he says that he has had to contract "debts under interest," in order to help the kingdom of Sicily.[74] And in 1328 the papal records show that "there was paid by the lord camerarius to the lord legate in Parma, for interest [*usura*] on 1200 gold florins, received as a loan from the merchants by that lord camerarius. . . . 28 gold florins and 20 shillings. . . . at the rate of 2 florins and 12 s. 4 d. imperial, for the hundred each month." [75] That other members of the clergy also used to borrow money on interest, is seen in the perusal of the original documents, among which there is a letter from the papal court to the abbot of St. Martin's monastery at Troyes, telling him that the bishop of Thérouanne owed money to some merchants of Siena, and must repay them within four months with damages and interest.[76]

In return for the favor shown to the popes, the Florentine and other Italian merchants received special privileges and official protection in foreign countries, notably in England and France, as was observed by Matthew Paris in his famous chronicle, *Chronica Majora,* which covers the period 1235 to 1259. He said: "The usurers are protected in England by the pope." In another place he remarked: "The merchants who practised usury were ejected from France, but he [Pope Innocent IV] protected them, and now the papal money-changers openly practise usury in London." [77]

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[73] W. Endemann, *Studien in der romanisch-kanonistischen Wirtschafts-und Rechtslehre bis gegen Ende des siebzehenten Jahrhunderts,* Vol. II (Berlin, 1883), p. 112.

[74] W. E. Lunt, *Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages,* Vol. II (New York, 1934), p. 206.

[75] W. E. Lunt, *l.c.,* Vol. I, p. 316.

[76] W. E. Lunt, *l.c.,* Vol. I, p. 331. This letter was written in 1253.

[77] *Mattaei parisiensis monachi Sancti Albani Chronica majora,* ed. H. R. Luard, Vol. V (Rolls Series, London, 1880), p. 194: "Usuararii, qui nomine Christiano censebantur, dicti Caursini, Papa tolerante primo et postea manifeste protegente, in Anglia receptacula et pacem inveniunt, et sine rubore mercatores vel escambiatores nominant Papae." See also p. 404: "Verbi gratia, mutuo accipio centum marcas per annum pro centum libris." And p. 405: "Et si forte sortem pecuniae tibi infra mensem vel dies pauciores adquisitam usurario Papali solvere volueris, non recipiet, nisi integraliter centum libras illi volueris; quae conditio gravior est quam Judaeorum." That the papal usurers should

In 1245 the Council of Lyons complained that many prelates did not repay the loans made by their predecessors, and that usury prevailed on an alarmingly large scale. The council hopes that henceforth loans will be greatly restricted, and that written contracts must stipulate the giving of a mortgage as security for the loan.[78] One of the prelates of the second half of the thirteenth century that became involved in heavy debts, was John Peckham, archbishop of Canterbury, who in a letter addressed to the bishop of Tusculum, dated July 12, 1279, complained about the merchants of Lucca who had loaned him 4000 marks, and were in such a hurry to get the money back that they had prevailed upon the papal court to procure a sentence of excommunication. Usually, he averred, the merchants had been willing to wait one or two years, but now they would not. He had not yet made a penny so far, and where was he to get the money to repay the merchants? Perhaps he would be obliged to leave England. Would the worthy bishop please help him? [79]

It can easily be imagined that if the clergy were so frequently guilty of violating the canonical prohibitions, laymen felt fewer scruples than before in evading those prohibitions. Making use of the word *census* (rent), they hid the interest charges very neatly under this respectable term. In Germany a special kind of rent charge was developed, called the "German Contract," which specified that five per cent was the proper rate of interest (called rent), and it was understood that, in keeping with the terms stipulated in 1425 by Pope Martin V, real estate holdings would be offered as security. The latter were said to be rented, and the rent charge was five per cent. It was of course difficult to tell whether the creditor had the use of the property thus offered as security, or merely a mortgage on it. Learned discussions by the jurists failed to settle

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be called worse than the Jewish money-changers, is an indication of how the public regarded papal finance and papal ethics.

[78] J. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* Vol. XXIII (Paris, 1903), col. 622-623: "Cura nos pastoralis solicitat et hortatur, ut lapsis consulamus ecclesiis, et, ne labantur in posterum, provideamus constitutione salubri. Cum igitur usurarum vorago multas ecclesias pene destruxerit, et nonnulli praelati circa solutionem debitorum, praesertim a suis praedecessoribus contractorum, negligentes inveniantur admodum et remissi, ac ad contrahenda majora debita, et obligandas res ecclesiae nimis proni . . . liquido cognoscatur."

[79] *Registrum epistolarum Fratris Johannis Peckham, archiepiscopi cantuariensis,* ed. Ch. T. Martin, Vol. I (London, 1882), pp. 21-23.

the question before the end of the Middle Ages, and we shall see that Luther, Zwingli, and Melanchthon were strongly affected by this unsettled condition arising from the interpretation of the "German Contract." [80]

Another important development which was reflected in the writings and teachings of the early Protestants is the origin of the word *interest,* for *usury,* as has been briefly noted above. It was known to everyone that the term "usury" was odious, and that one could not afford to offend the authority of the Church, even though the clergy were sometimes found guilty themselves. Consequently, the theologians and jurists were called upon to furnish a way of escape from the prohibition of lending money on interest. It was explained that interest (called *interesse* in Latin, and *interêt* in French) was not at all the same as what had been called usury before. All that was meant by the new term was a sort of indemnity paid for the damage done to the creditor in depriving him of the use of his money. However, it was felt by many that such talk was plain hypocrisy, as it often, but not always, was.[81]

In the first half of the thirteenth century, Albert the Great, the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, had expressed his sympathy for the merchants who were in need of capital, and could not secure any except by doing exactly what the clergy had been guilty of, namely, borrowing money on interest. Albert said: "To give money on interest confers advantage upon the natural state of man, and for that reason it is permitted by the emperor and also by the kings. But the ecclesiastical judge judges according to the eternal state of man, and therefore condemns it." [82] The learned author, teaching in Paris, and also for a time in Cologne, saw what was actually going on in the business world. By the middle of the thirteenth century, Paris was very prosperous, and Cologne was the busiest and largest city in Germany. Albert's pupil, Thomas Aquinas, likewise taught in these two great centers of commerce and industry. Consequently,

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[80] W. Endemann, *l.c.,* Vol. II, pp. 148-154.

[81] W. Endemann, *l.c.,* Vol. II, pp. 243-318.

[82] *Albertus Magnus, In III Sentent. Dist. XXXVII,* Art. 13: "Dare ad usuram multum confert ad bonum statum naturalem; et ideo imperatur [judex temporalis] permittit et reges similiter. Sed Ecclesiasticus judex judicat secundum bonum statum aeternitatis: et ideo condemnat." See *B. Alberti Magni . . . Opera Omnia,* Vol. XXVII, ed. A. Borgnet (Paris, 1894), p. 708.

it is no wonder that their viewpoint was so liberal for their time, and that their authority was frequently used by the jurists who in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries developed the theory about the difference between usury (an ecclesiastical term) and interest (a secular term).

Papal bulls now followed in swift order, allowing the Jews to charge regular rates of interest on loans. Early in the sixteenth century, Charles V permitted his subjects in the Netherlands to charge as much as twelve per cent. And in many regions of western Europe it became customary for persons in need of cash to borrow money by offering real estate as security. Sometimes the security consisted in movable goods, a sort of chattel mortgage. Thousands of persons were indeed paying such interest when Luther first rose to fame in Germany.[83]

Now the question arises, Did capitalism grow naturally out of the environment which we have just discussed, or did the Reformation cause its rapid rise for the most part at least? Is it true, as many scholars have said recently, that wherever Protestantism went, capitalism followed it? Again, is it true that before the Reformation the peoples of western Europe could not break away from the rules laid down by Aquinas and Aristotle concerning usury and the dishonor which was attached to "big business"? Finally, is it true that the vocation of each individual was looked upon in the Middle Ages as something of little significance, and that not until Luther and Calvin had endowed it with a religious character, was it regarded with proper respect?

Before the reader turns to an examination of the works of the two outstanding Protestants of the sixteenth century, he is likely to surmise that the last three questions should all be answered in the negative. Such is the verdict of many Roman Catholic scholars who have rightly asserted that the Protestant writers in Germany, led by Max Weber and Ernest Troeltsch, failed to study thoroughly the medieval mind. Such will be the verdict of the present writer in the following two chapters. And it is his belief that the subsequent pages

[83] G. Schmoller, "Zur Geschichte der national-ökonomischen Ansichten in Deutschland während der Reformations-Periode," in *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft,* Vol. XVI (1860), pp. 556-557. See also the reports by Luther and Calvin respectively in Chs. II and III.

after Chs. II and III will strengthen that verdict in the mind of the reader.[84]

[84] Two excellent discussions of these questions have been presented respectively by one Italian and one Dutch scholar, both eminent Catholics, who have devoted much careful study to the whole problem. See A. Fanfani, *Cattolicesimo e Protestantesimo nella formazione storica del capitalismo* (Milan, 1934), Ch. V; Ir. E. H. M. Beekman, *l.c.*, pp. 45-75.

Chapter II

MARTIN LUTHER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CAPITALISM

Martin Luther appears to have been the favored son of a miner (Hans Luther), who, before moving to Eisleben in the County of Mansfeld near the electorate of Saxony, had been a farmer (not a peasant).[1] Unlike the offspring of the average German peasant, young Luther was enabled to acquire an excellent elementary and secondary education, which, in accordance with his father's wishes, was to have been followed by a complete course in the faculty of law at the University of Erfurt.[2]

"When I became a monk," said Luther afterward, "my father was about to go mad. He was greatly displeased, and did not want to give his consent. When I wrote him, he answered me, calling me *Du,* whereas before he had called me *Ihr,* because of my Master's degree. Then came a pestilence, which robbed him of two of his sons. He was urged to make a holy sacrifice and give his consent to my entrance into the monastery. Father hesitated a long time, till finally he yielded. However, he did not do it willingly, with a free and happy heart." [3]

There is food for thought in those significant words of Martin Luther. As his father's income increased, he formed plans for the career of a distinguished lawyer to be enjoyed by Martin. Whatever may have been the reasons why Luther suddenly determined to

[1] See R. Pascal, *The Social Basis of the German Reformation. Martin Luther and his Times* (London, 1933), pp. 22, 192; O. Scheel, *Von Katholizismus zur Reformation,* Vol. I (Tübingen, 1921), pp. 1-7; J. Mackinnon, *Luther and the Reformation,* Vol. I (London, 1927), pp. 1-3. There was a vast difference between a Bauer and a Knecht, which Pascal did not fully note.

[2] See the sources just mentioned above, and A. V. Müller, *Luthers Werdegang bis zum Turmerlebnis* (Gotha, 1920), Ch. I.

[3] Quoted from A. Hyma, *Luther's Theological Development from Erfurt to Augsburg* (New York, 1928), p. 11.

become a monk in the year 1505,[4] his father had wanted him to select a profession in keeping with the newly acquired wealth of the proud miner. He had no desire to see Martin, who had taken second place among seventeen candidates for the Master's degree, bury himself in a monastery. Of what value was Martin's religious fervor to the family when compared with the position of a successful lawyer?

The terrific spiritual conflict experienced by Luther in the monastery indicates that he sincerely endeavored to conform to the requirements of the monastic life, something which could not have been said of the humanist Erasmus. "I was an earnest monk," he wrote in 1531, "lived strictly and chastely, would not have taken a penny without the knowledge of the prior, and prayed diligently day and night." Two years later he expressed the same sentiments: "It is true that I have been a pious monk, and followed my rules so strictly that I may say, if ever a monk could have gained heaven through monkery, I certainly should have got there."

From 1505 to 1512 Luther was an ascetic monk: "My whole life was little more than fasting, watching, prayers, sighs, etc. But beneath this cover of sanctity and this confidence in my own justification, I felt a continued doubt. . . . I was attached to the papal laws and the traditions of the Fathers. . . . I was so zealous and so superstitious that I imposed more on my body than it could bear without endangering my health."[5]

During his business trip in Italy, which occurred in the winter of 1510-1511, Luther continued his attempts to combine faith with "good works": "Since I was such a fanatical saint, I ran from one church to another, and believed all the lies that had been told there. I said about ten masses, and I was almost sorry that my father and my mother were still living, for I would have loved to release them from purgatory with my masses." Nevertheless, he must have had other things to think about when in Rome, for he had been sent there by his religious order to confer with certain officials in the papal court. It is likely that the voyage to and from Italy taught him much about the business world.

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[4] These reasons have been carefully analyzed in H. Strohl, *L'Evolution religieuse de Luther jusqu'en 1515* (Strasbourg and Paris, 1922), pp. 56-64.

[5] A. Hyma, *Luther's theol. Dev.*, pp. 12-13.

Luther's break with the Roman Catholic Church was caused very largely by the theological beliefs he had developed in the period from 1505 to 1515, and which he so eloquently expressed in his lectures on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, delivered at the University of Wittenberg in the academic year 1515-1516. These lectures, which were never published before the twentieth century, reveal his views on original sin, predestination, the corruption of man, the abuses prevailing in the Church, free will, and justification by faith.

Luther's comments on the doctrine of predestination are of great historical importance, for they strongly affected the teachings of the Calvinists. So much is usually made of predestination by writers who have studied the relation between Protestantism and the rise of capitalism that a definite line of demarcation is frequently drawn between those who accepted Luther's or Calvin's doctrine and those (especially the Arminians in the Netherlands) who rejected it. Luther's own words constitute our most reliable source of information on this subject. He wrote: "God commands that the elect shall be saved and that those who are destined for hell shall be entangled in evil in order that He may show forth His mercy and also His anger. . . . God does not accept the person on account of the works, but the works on account of the person." In the year 1525, during his controversy with Erasmus concerning free will and predestination, Luther continued to argue in the same vein: "As for myself, I confess that were I offered free will, I would not have it, or any other instrument that might aid in my salvation; not only, because, besieged by so many perils and adversities, amidst that horde of devils who assail me on all sides, it would be impossible for me to preserve or make use of that instrument of salvation, since one devil is stronger than all men put together, and no way of real salvation would be open to me; but because, were the dangers surmounted, and the devils put to flight, I should labor in uncertainty, and my aim would be fatigued to no purpose in beating the air with useless blows. . . . But since God has taken care of my salvation, independently of my free will, and has promised to save me by His grace and His mercy without the concurrence of my works, I am certain that He . . . is powerful enough to prevent me from being broken by adversity or carried off by the devil. So then, if all are not elect,

much fewer will be so, since by free will none could be saved, and all would perish." [6]

Anyone who has become interested in Luther's political and economic views is apt to forget for the moment that the religious and theological experiences of Luther from 1515 to 1525 form the chief factor in the rise of Protestantism.[7] Such forgetfulness should never be permitted, however, for it would inevitably lead to a serious misunderstanding of both Luther and early Protestantism. Luther's political and economic theories are decidedly determined by his religious convictions. Practically all his writings are colored by them, and nearly all his actions were governed by them as well. His attempted return to the spirit of St. Paul and St. Augustine became the primary cause of Portestantism.[8]

Although strongly influenced by Occamism when in the monastery at Erfurt and Wittenberg, Luther gradually began to drift away from scholasticism in general. His respect for Aristotle and for the Canon Law declined proportionately and simultaneously. In 1517 he could still write: "I read the scholastics with an open mind; I neither reject all they say, nor approve all." In the next year he revealed his attitude thus: "I believe it is impossible to reform the Church unless the Canon Law, scholastic theology, philosophy and logic, as they are now taught, are completely eradicated. I daily ask the Lord that the pure study of the Bible and the Fathers may be restored." In 1519 he said to John Eck: "The reason why I preferred Tauler to the scholastics is that I learned more from him alone than from all the others." Similar views were revealed by him in his *Resolutions on the Propositions Discussed in the Leipzig Debate,* dated 1519: "I know and confess that I learned nothing from the scholastic theologians but ignorance of sin, righteousness, baptism, and the whole Christian life. Briefly, I not only learned nothing, but

[6] A. Hyma, *Luther's Theol. Dev.,* pp. 28-29, 76-77.

[7] This must have been the experience, for example, of Professor H. J. Laski, who made the following extraordinary statement about the origins of the Reformation: "Protestantism had been derived from the study of the Old Testament." See his English edition of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos,* under the title of *A Defence of Liberty against Tyrants* (London, 1924), p. 23.

[8] How well this fact is understood by Catholic writers today may be seen in the third volume of the excellent church history by Dr. J. de Jong, Archbishop of Utrecht, *Handboek der kerkgeschiedenis* (Utrecht, 1937) pp. 9-19, where also a useful bibliography is presented.

I learned only that which I had to unlearn as contrary to the Scriptures." [9]

Luther's criticisms of the humanists confirms his attachment to the Bible: "I have read Erasmus, and my opinion of him grows daily worse. I am indeed pleased that he refutes stoutly and learnedly both the monks and the priests, and condemns their inveterate ignorance. But I fear that he does not sufficiently advance the cause of Christ and the grace of God, in which he is more ignorant than Lefèvre. The human weighs more with him than the divine." These words are to be found in his letter to John Lang, prior at Erfurt, which was dated March 1st, 1517.

All of the pronouncements of Luther just quoted show that he cared not at all what the medieval doctors, the scholastic theologians and the humanists believed was correct. His final authority resided only in the Word of God. Hereafter this fact must constantly be borne in mind as we shall examine Luther's attitude toward capitalism. Furthermore, he placed the realm of the spirit so far above the material world that he devoted only about one hundred folio pages to economic questions out of a total of approximately forty-thousand pages. On economic problems he did not pretend to speak as an authority, nor did he recognize any other human being as an authority, except in some minor details. What could it have mattered to him that the Canon Law prohibited the taking of interest on loans, and why should he have taken the pains to study at great length the works of medieval writers who discussed questions related to finance, banking, credit, accounting, or usury? All that a Christian needed to know was to be found in the Bible.

Luther's first important references to economic questions are given in the *Short Sermon on Usury,* which appeared in 1519 and was reproduced in the *Long Sermon on Usury,* dated 1520. The latter in turn was reprinted in the very interesting treatise entitled, *On Trade and Usury,* and published in 1524.[10] However, Luther made some earlier comments dealing with theft and usury, which are analyzed here first, for they occur in the *Sermon on the Ten Commandments Preached to the People of Wittenberg,* delivered in the

[9] A. Hyma, *Luther's Theol. Dev.,* pp. 41, 42, 43, 16.

[10] See Luther's *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol., VI, pp 3-8 and 36-60; Vol. XV, pp. 293-322.

second half of 1516 and the opening months of 1517, and carefully edited by Luther in the year 1518. It is in the sermon on the Seventh (Eighth) Commandment, long neglected by historians and other scholars, that Luther clearly indicated to the populace of Wittenberg what he thought of the injunctions contained in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.[11]

This sermon on the Eighth Commandment was preached in the Latin language during the Christmas holidays of 1516, and thus it preceded his celebrated Ninety-Five Theses by about ten months. Luther was still a professor of theology in good standing, and he spoke still as a good Catholic. It will be interesting to compare his views on economic theories with those which he pronounced after the year 1518.

The sermon opens with quotations from I Cor. XIII, Gal. V, Rom. XIII, Luke XVI, and Matth. V. This is remarkable for a person who is expounding a commandment given in the Old Testament, and who is said to have started the Reformation by going back to the Old Testament.[12] The speaker contrasts the verdict of the jurists, who regard only the deed, that is, the theft itself, with the Bible, which looks upon the heart. One may commit theft by merely thinking about it. Five kinds of theft are distinguished in order, of which the third is called usury. Luther compares it with the worm that destroys the interior of an apple. In the same manner does usury destroy our cities, see Deut. XXIII (v. 20). The Jews were permitted, because of the hardness of their hearts, to practice usury with gentiles, in order that among themselves they would not be guilty of it. Now the Christians are much worse than the Jews used to be, for they lend money on interest to their own brethren.

The fourth kind of theft is fraud in business dealings, see I Thess. IV (v. 6). Here we are to follow the rule propounded in Matt. VII (v. 12): "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Love considers the welfare of one's neighbor, hence our Lord said that this is the law and the prophets. The world is full of fraud, and even the farmers are adepts in deceitful tricks. They turn light into darkness and darkness into light. Spiritual poverty is to

[11] *Werke*, Vol. I, pp. 499-505.
[12] See above, note 7.

eradicate this insatiable beast, this cupidity, which is the root of all crimes. The mendicant monks (friars) and the other monks are also subject sometimes to theft in the sight of God. Luther, unlike Thomas Aquinas, makes no exceptions or reservations. The seizure of another man's property is theft under all circumstances.

The last paragraph is devoted to contracts, whereby rents are bought and sold, bringing profits to persons who do not work for them at all. We have been exhorted in Genesis III (v. 19) to work for our living, and Job says that man was born to labor (Ch. V, 7). However, there are certain cases in which it is permitted to buy rents. (Luther refers here to the practice described in the previous chapter and designated by the Latin word *census,* and the German word *Zins.* We shall see that in the sermon on usury, Luther had much to say about this custom.) Firstly, old and decrepit people, as well as children, may avail themselves of it, for they have enough to do in taking care of themselves; secondly, the members of the clergy; and thirdly, the officials in the government. The clergy serve God, and the civil officers serve the people. "There is no evil in the purchase of rents, except when one serves thereby the evil of avarice, or seeks anything besides 'safe riches,' " which presumably means wealth intended for the use of charity.[13]

We shall now turn to the examination of the three works mentioned above, in which Luther explains what is meant by the term *Zinskauf,* that is, the purchase of a mortgage on real estate. In the two sermons on usury, Luther makes a careful distinction between two kinds of loans, on the first of which no interest may be paid, while on the second it is considered permissible. Both sermons begin with a general condemnation of what was in Luther's time called usury: "In the first place, it must be noted that at the present time avarice and usury have not only made tremendous strides all over the world but they have boldly sought some cover under which they may freely carry on their evil deeds. And they have almost gotten on so far that we think of the Holy Gospel as worth nothing. . . . Three kinds of degrees may be distinguished of taking proper care of temporal possessions.[14] In the first, some person forcibly deprives us

[13] *Werke,* I, 505: "Non ergo illi sunt securi, qui tantummodo sibi serviunt censibus emptis. Non quod emere census adeo sit malum, sed quod avaritiae in hoc servire nec aliud quam divitias securas quaerere peccatum est."

[14] In the famous article by Gustav Schmoller entitled "Zur Geschichte der national-

of part of our property, in which case we must not only let him keep it but be prepared to let him get still more if he so desire. Of this our dear Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew V, 40, 'If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.' . . . In His whole passion we see that He never repaid an evil word, but was always prepared to suffer still more.

"This means for many that the first degree is not demanded of every Christian, but it is good advice to the perfect, just as chastity and virginity are recommended but not commanded. Consequently, they advise that everyone retrieve his proprty, and repay force with force. . . . It is true, however, that God has instituted the temporal sword, and also the spiritual authority of the Church; and He has commanded both to punish the evil-doers and to rescue the oppressed. . . . But that is to be done in such manner that the person attacked by the other shall not make an accusation against him. On the contrary, the matter is to be settled in brotherly fashion, as suggested by St. Paul in I Chor. VI, 6-10. . . . See also Psalm XXXVI [XXXVII], 'I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.' . . . This first degree has become obscured by mists and clouds of human laws, customs, practices and morals.

"The second degree signifies that we must freely give to those who ask for assistance, as our Lord says in Matthew V [42], 'Give to him that asketh thee.' And although this degree is less important than the first, it is nevertheless hard and bitter for those who love temporal riches more than eternal wealth. For they have little faith in God that He will nourish them in this life of misery. . . . Still they imagine that God will give them eternal salvation, although they refuse to keep His commandments.

"The third degree is even less important than the second, for it was given also to the bad, imperfect people of the Jews in the Old Testament in Deut. XV [11], 'There will always be poor people in the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open

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ökonomischen Ansichten in Deutschland während der Reformations-Periode" (published in *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft,* Vol. XVI, 1860, pp. 461-716), from which numerous writers have quoted, the writer speaks of three degrees of usury distinguished by Luther. This is far from the truth, for the plain robbery called the first degree is in no sense usury.

thine hand wide unto thy brother.' . . . And He says in Deut. XV [4], 'There shall be no beggar among you.' . . .

"That we should gladly loan money without interest, is recommended by our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew V [42] . . . In His commandment He has excluded no one, but has included even enemies, as He says in Luke VI [34, 35], 'And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great.' . . . It follows that those are guilty of usury who loan wine, grain, or money to others, which they give up for a period of one year or some definite time, on condition that they will receive more or better products back again.

"Some persons will argue that this is not feasible, for in the first place the loan will lose its 'interest,' that is, profit and in the second place, it has become a universal custom in the world to loan with the expectation of deriving a profit from it. Answer: In the first place, you must lose the profit anyhow, when the property is taken from you, or if you loan it, as said, without profit. Why then do you lend and expect to get that profit? For he who mentions in advance that he gives or lends, must say what the interest must be, else he neither gives nor lends.[15] In the second place, whether a thing is customary or not customary matters not, for that does not make the thing Christian or godly or natural. And when the clergy do it, so much the worse, for they have no right to enrich themselves through injustice and usury. . . . Therefore it is no wonder that there are so few Christians. . . . He who refuses to lend to his neighbor without profit shows great unbelief, for he despises the words of Jesus, 'When we lend and give, we shall be the children of the Highest, and our reward shall be great'."

Here follows the second part of the sermon, in which Luther remarks that there is another kind of loan which has recently come

[15] This reference by Luther to the Old Testament applies to the third degree and not the second, as G. Schmoller wrongly avers (p. 559).

[16] Schmoller says of this: "Die Antwort Luthers auf das erstere hat keinen rechten Sinn; denn sie widerlegt den Einwurf nicht, sondern sagt nur, dann solle man seine Sachen lieber ganz behalten" (see his article, p. 560). Luther would argue in his defense that the question had no sense in it, for it was assumed that the commandments of Christ had the force of law for the Christian.

into vogue. This is the *Zinskauf,* a purchase of interest. It looks respectable, for one may without committing sin place burdens upon others, and thus become rich without care or labor. "Although this purchase of interest is now accepted as proper, it is despicable, because it has newly been invented, in this dangrous age, for the purpose of satisfying the demand of everyone for material gain. Again, when we know it is proper, it looks bad to others, and we must follow the injunction of St. Paul, who said that it is well to avoid giving others offense, I Thess. V [22]. Furthermore, the person who buys the interest receives as a rule the greater share of the profit. Finally, it must be admitted by all that it has the same results as usury in that it also encumbers property with heavy debts. . . .

"Consequently, it is not enough that the Canon Law permits it. Money acquired in gambling is also not usury. . . . Let us now consider how this traffic is made permissible. It is a word which in Latin is called *Interest,* which translated into German means, If I have one hundred guilders with which I wish to do some trading and so in the course of one year I may make a profit of four, five, or six guilders, I present this sum to another who has a good piece of land, in order that he may use it to his advantage. Therefore I receive from him five guilders. He sells that sum to me, five guilders out of one hundred, and I am the person who buys, while he sells to me. . . . This interest is deemed proper. But much of this is mere appearance, for if I have one hundred guilders, and I wish to make some profit with it, the chances are four to one that I will lose part of it rather than make profit on it. This sort of buying cannot be compared with regular trade, for that involves labor and care; while with this other trade one can sit still, be incapable and indolent, and still make a profit. Consequently, it is difficult to determine whether one is entitled to any interest at all. Who would not prefer to loan money at interest rather than use the capital in commerce? There one may easily lose twenty guilders in one year, while here one loses no more than five. . . . And so it is not surprising that many of these 'interest lords' get rich faster than others. . . . Since the element of risk is present, it should not be permitted to loan money on mere money, as the great merchants do, but there should be some security in the form of real estate, and this should be specifically indicated."

Luther reasons that as long as there is a definite piece of land

available, the loan will be safe, and so it is proper to loan money to the owner. He assumes that this owner will be trustworthy. Modern critics have accused Luther of being altogether too naive, of forgetting that no merchant can do business without borrowed capital, and that many a farmer might well squander the sum of money that was lent him.[17] The farmer, however, is subject to God's powers, the elements, such as floods, hail, lightning, wolves, wild beasts, fire, wind, as well as death and disease. These dangers are the risks undertaken by the buyer of the interest, and it is for this reason only that he may receive such interest.[18] Merchants, Luther would have argued, do business on an entirely different basis, and it must be admitted that Luther expresses very little interest in their activities, at least in the two sermons on usury.

In case the debtor has a bad year, continues Luther, he may go to the creditor at the end of the year and say to him, "This year I do not owe you anything, because I made nothing." If money is loaned to those who have need of it for making their living, it must be given without interest. But in case both men concerned will be much benefited by the transaction, it is to be commended. "When this happens without violation of the spiritual law, that one gives four, five or six per cent interest, it is to be tolerated. . . . The lower the rate of interest is, the more it approaches the Christian and godly standard. . . . But there are some who charge seven, eight, nine, or ten per cent. Here the wealthy must look out. They are trying to fleece the poor in secret. Thus it happens frequently that such robbers and usurers, like the tyrants and highway robbers, die an untimely death." Once more, at the end of the sermon, Luther urges the reader to beware of lending money without security, to indicate the reason why he had favored the taking of interest at all.

The sentiments divulged by Luther in his two sermons on usury may be considered the foundation upon which all his subsequent

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[17] See, for example, Schmoller's article, pp. 562-565. H. Grisar ridicules Luther for his "inconsistency" (*Luther,* Vol. III, pp. 586-596).

[18] These words, though frequently overlooked, deserve emphasis: "Czum achten. Und diss ist die eynige enthaltung disses kaufs, das er nit eyn wucher sey und mehr thut, dan alle interesse, das der zinss juncker seyn zinss hab yn aller fahr und uyr ungewiss sey, als aller andern seyner guttern . . . Disse fahr allesampt sollen den zinss hern betreffen, dan auff solchen und nicht andern grund stehen seyne zinss." See *Werke,* Vol. VI, pp. 56-57.

economic thought was based. After the year 1520 he made no statements that can be construed as very significant, for in nearly every particular he merely conformed to the accepted teachings of the Bible and the early Christian church. In his well-known *Address to the German Nobility,* dated 1520, he supplemented the contribution made in the two sermons just mentioned, but added nothing new or startling. It must be admitted, however, that as his moods varied, so he would examine the burning questions of the day from different angles, and occasionally he would seemingly contradict a verdict pronounced earlier.

Two pages in the *Address to the German Nobility* require analysis here.[19] The author happened to be in a mood which was most antagonistic to the authorities in the Church, and he flayed the men in all walks of life who in his opinion had forsaken the teachings of Jesus. It is therefore not surprising to hear him argue against the pomp and ceremony in the papal court: "It is a distressing thing to see the head of Christendom, who boasts of being the Vicar of Christ and the successor of St. Peter, live in a worldly pomp that no king or emperor could equal: so that in him who calls himself most holy and most spiritual, there is more worldliness than in the world itself." [20] The universities are also severely criticized for being little more than "Schools of 'Greek fashion.' " Luther recommends that "the blind heathen teacher, Aristotle," be dethroned: "Now, my advice would be that the books of Aristotle, the *Physics,* the *Metaphysics, Of the Soul,* and *Ethics,* which have hitherto been considered the best, be altogether abolished, with all others that profess to treat of nature, though nothing can be learned from them, either of natural or of spiritual things."

To return to those two pages which reveal Luther's economic theories. In the first place he bitterly complains about the widespread use of expensive things in Germany. He pleads that God has given Germany plenty of wool, hair and flax; and it is altogether unnecessary to import silks, velvet, and whatever else foreign nations produce. Spices are also superfluous. More food and bev-

[19] See the *Werke,* Vol. VI, pp. 465-466.

[20] A. Hyma, *The Theol. Dev. of Luther,* pp. 52-53. An excellent English translation of the whole work is to be found in H. Wace and C. A. Bucheim, *First Principles of the Reformation,* pp. 17-92.

erages are grown and produced in Germany than in any other country, and their quality is as good as that of other victuals. It is not his intention to destroy international commerce, but he feels that commerce has brought little good to the people as a whole. God did not want Israel to depend on a large volume of trade, and that ought to be an example to the Germans.

The greatest misfortune that has befallen Germany is the *Zinskauf,* which has made possible this enormous consumption of luxuries. The practice is not much more than one hundred years old, and already it has impoverished nearly all the princes, religious homes, burgher elements and nobles. If it were to last another hundred years, it is hardly possible that there would be a penny left in Germany. The Fugger family should certainly be held in check. How is it done that in the life of one person such immense wealth is heaped up? He does not understand how money can be earned at the rate of twenty per cent and sometimes one hundred per cent by loaning it to others without security in the form of real estate, or cattle. It would be better for everybody if commerce were reduced in volume and agriculture increased in the same proportion. For God told Adam that he should till the soil and labor diligently, inasmuch as the earth would bring forth thistles and thorns. Finally, excessive eating and drinking has given the Germans a bad reputation abroad. Hence it is Luther's advice that his fellow-countrymen become more sparing in their demands for ease and luxury, and that they must be willing to work for their living.

During the past fifty years a large number of writers have drawn the conclusion from some of Luther's opinions that he and his followers based their reactionary economic theories on the decisions made by Aristotle.[21] How misleading such reasoning is may be gathered from a careful perusal of Luther's *Address to the German Nobility,* where, in Point XXV he severely condemns the blind heathen, Aristotle, and in Point XXVII he briefly presents the most important economic theories of his own. He adds that the three books by Aristotle on *Rhetoric, Logic* and *Poetry* might be retained and studied in abbreviated form, but the commentaries must be

[21] See, for example, E. Troeltsch, *The Soc. Ethics,* II, 554, note 265: "Here also Aristotle is master, see Schmoller, 470." Troeltsch, who copied Schmoller, was in turn copied by others.

abolished. What he did not like in Aristotle, as he said, was the latter's opinions on the physical and the spiritual world, including the world of nature.[21]

Furthermore, we shall in the next chapter hear some modern commentators say that, "whereas Luther could not break away from Aristotle and the Canon Law, Calvin was more advanced and brought about for modern Europe a great emancipation." It would be well, then, to see what Luther said in his *Address to the German Nobility* about the Canon Law. "Every letter," he suggested, "of the Canon Law, from beginning to end, should be removed, especially the *Decretals*. It suffices for us that we have the Bible, wherein has been stated how we are to govern ourselves in all matters. . . . In the field of theology we see that the students read first the commentaries and then the Bible. The order must be reversed." [23] He added that even in the elementary and secondary schools the Bible should be taught.

It is commonly understood that Luther's most important work dealing with purely economic matters is his treatise *On Trade and Usury,* first published in the year 1524.[24] This is no doubt true, since it includes the *Long Sermon on Usury,* but the treatise does not add many valuable thoughts to those to be found in the two works which were published in 1520.

As is to be expected, Luther approves of commerce when conducted honestly and on a limited scale. However, he was well aware of the fact that about nine-tenths of the population of Europe lived and labored in the country, and he correctly reasoned that where people lived out in the open, with much space all about them, the chances were comparatively small that crime and vice would multiply rapidly, as they were threatening to do in the great centers of commerce and industry. Another danger lurking in trade generally was the avarice which impelled many merchants to think only of how much they could extract from the consumer. Luther talked as many socialists and labor leaders of our day have talked, pointing out how much such and such a great business man has made, obviously at the expense of the public.

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[22] See *Werke,* Vol. VI, p. 458.
[23] See *Werke,* Vol. VI, pp. 459-460.
[24] See *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol. XV (1899), pp. 293-322.

Luther's first concern was the loss of gold and silver to Germany as a result of the demand for luxuries, especially spices from India, which made the Portuguese rich, and expensive cloths manufactured and sold by the English. This was, as we saw, a repetition of what he had said in 1520, but the subject-matter is enlarged in 1524. Next follow a number of abuses prevalent among the great business men. First, the attempt to extort prices that are too high. Luther suggests that the government regulate prices as far as is necessary and expedient, but he hopes that this can be avoided. In order to determine how much a business man should earn, he advises that the average wage earned by a laborer in one day be set as a standard, and the ability, energy and industry of the business man be computed on that basis, something which Adam Smith recommended more than two hundred years later.[25]

The second evil which abounds in the commercial world and also elsewhere is the practice of giving security for another. Although this seems to be a virtuous deed and without sin, nevertheless it often causes both moral and financial damage to the person giving the security, as King Solomon intimated in Proverbs VI (1-6). Reference is also made to Proverbs XX, XXII, and XXVII.

Luther warns next against the contempt shown by many persons for God's commandments, and the accompanying desire to ignore the providence of God. As St. James says in Ch. IV (13-16), how dare anyone say that tomorrow he will do this or that, without adding, "If it be God's will?" The rich man, in Luke XII (16-21), piled up his goods, and was going to enjoy himself, but that same night God required of him his soul. And Solomon in his whole book, *Ecclesiastes,* enlarges upon the same subject.

"There are four ways," continues Luther, "of trading or associating with other people, as I have said before." Three of these he had actually discussed in his *Sermon on Usury,*[26] as was indicated above.

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[25] This has been pointed out in Schmoller's article, p. 495. For Luther's own words, see *Werke,* XV, pp. 295-298.

[26] These were called the three degrees of properly taking care of one's property, which Schmoller mistook for three kinds of usury, and which E. Troeltsch erroneously calls "ways in which we ought to behave in a Christian way in business" (see his two-volume work, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches,* Vol. II, p. 870, note 273). It is little wonder that Troeltsch cannot understand why out of these four ways of doing business, only the last one really refers to trade: "Then only comes the fourth

The fourth way is the buying and selling of goods. Luther urges all merchants to pay cash for their wares, and not to ask for credit. In this respect he is thoroughly conservative, but not because of what Aristotle or the Canon Law said, from which he did not quote in his three important economic works, but because of the injunctions contained in the Bible. He vehemently attacks what we would now call trust companies, or monopolies, that is, organizations which would buy up all the goods of a certain kind and then resell them at a huge profit. He claims that the measures taken by Joseph in Egypt to prevent starvation during the seven lean years, were different in character from monopolies. He feels that government regimentation has its good points.[27]

Very interesting are Luther's comments on the clever tricks perpetrated in his time by unscrupulous persons who sell goods which they do not possess at a price which is above the current level, accept cash before delivery, buy the same goods at the lower figure and sell them, or rather deliver them a few days later to the original buyer. In this manner one makes money without having invested anything. Other practices of a similar nature are likewise condemned.[28]

Near the end of the treatise, after the reproduction of the *Long Sermon on Usury,* Luther refers to the outrageous rates of interest charged in Saxony, Luneborg and Holstein, where people not only have raised the rates to ten per cent, but they exact horses, cows, bacon and grain, so that they have become "house-robbers" and "garden-robbers." They are no longer human beings but wolves.[29]

Luther now makes a suggestion which thus far has received very little attention, partly because to the modern authorities on economics it must have seemed highly impractical. Imbued with the idea that the Scriptures rather than Aristotle and the Canon Law or civil law contain the necessary instructions to govern society, Luther naturally turns to the Old Testament, where the people of

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way, that we buy and sell goods for goods or goods for money." Only a careful study of all the three works in question and all *in extenso* will make this clear. It certainly is unfair to Luther to say of him that he was antagonistic to business because he reminded his readers of the fact that a business man must needs be as good a Christian as a farmer.

[27] See *Werke,* XV, 305-306.

[28] *Werke,* XV, 307-313.

[29] *Werke,* XV, 321.

Israel were told how to govern themselves under a theocratic government until they finally got a king of their own.

Luther avers that the most suitable arrangement would be that everybody surrender one-tenth of his property or income to the state: "For all such unjust charging of interest there is no better remedy than in following the example of Moses and in doing away with all improper charges of interest. The state or society as a whole is to take one-tenth or if necessary, one-ninth, or one-eighth, or one-sixth, of all property, and in this manner everything would be in accordance with God's will. If one-tenth of the value would suffice for interest, all would be well, and if it were not enough, the persons who extended the loans would not receive adequate profit, and subsequently the rate should be increased. In other words, there would never be a definite rate, but the rate would always depend on general economic conditions.

"Therefore the rate of ten per cent is the best, and from the beginning of time it was used and accepted as the most equitable according to divine and natural law. If one-tenth is not enough, one should take one-ninth, the rate depending on the value of the land or the house. For Joseph initiated or found in use in Egypt the giving of one-fifth, and here the equitable law of God remains ever in existence when the person who lends the money takes all the risk. If one-fifth turns out to be fair to both parties concerned, it is well; but if the rate proves too high, it must be reduced. It is to be no definite rate."

On the last page of the treatise, Luther continues in a more "up-to-date" vein: "But since at the present time *Zinskauf,* the buying of interest, is not subject to varying rates, the result is that land and people must become corrupted. For the buyer of interest takes and buys unequal years for equal years, and poor years for rich years; yea, he buys God's blessing, not yet given, as if it had already been given. That cannot and may not ever be right. In that way one person extracts from another his very sweat and blood. And it is no wonder that in a short time (the practice has been in vogue during the past one hundred years) all princes, lands and subjects have become impoverished.

"But he who does not lend money on a forthcoming harvest of grain, but on houses or land, where people work with their hands,

can properly do so in accordance with the law of Moses (Lev. XXV, 10), that he does it for a "half year", that is, fifty years, and not on a perpetual basis. I feel that, since things are done so inordinately, it is best to follow the laws of God, with which He governed His people. He is certainly as wise as human beings, and one need not be ashamed of maintaining the laws of the Jews, since that is useful and good.

"The emperors, kings, princes and lords should take care that the horrible evil of usury be checked. The imperial diets should take up this matter as one of the most important questions before the country today. But they let it go unnoticed and so they serve the tyranny of the Pope, with the result that land and people become burdened with excessive debts."

It is not surprising that few commentators have taken the pains to explain this extraordinary passage in the treatise *On Trade and Usury*. After Luther had reasoned that the highest rate of interest permissible was six per cent, how then could he turn around in the same treatise and argue that sometimes one might charge twenty per cent, and that ten per cent was the best figure, since that was in accordance with the law of Moses? To ignore the passage, which is usually done, or to ridicule the author for it, will not do. The only way to gain an understanding of Luther's obscure process of reasoning is to study the first five books in the Bible, the "Five Books of Moses," the Pentateuch.

We observe that the Israelites were enjoined to pay tithes, one-tenth of their income to maintain the priesthood, that is the Church. This practice of paying tithes was continued into modern times by the Roman Catholic and some Protestant denominations. Moreover, the forty-seventh chapter of Genesis relates how Joseph bought all the land in Egypt from the subjects of the Pharaoh, all except the land of the priests. The priests had lands assigned to them by the Pharaoh, and they received their food free of charge from the government, wherefore they alone were not obliged to surrender their lands in return for food during the seven years of famine. "And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only." In short, after the people had lost all their land to the government, it was returned to them at the end of the famine, together

with the necessary seed for the new crop, on condition that each year they would surrender one-fifth of their crops to the government. This was construed by Luther as a sort of loan, with the interest charges being twenty per cent. But he added that this arrangement ought not to be continued, as it was not continued among the Israelites, for more than fifty years. In Luther's mind, therefore, the ideal arrangement was some form of state socialism, whereby the state, assisted by the Church, would prevent speculation, monopolies, and usury. Perhaps it might be called Christian socialism, if such a term were possible. Once more the reader is cautioned against accepting the many current theories which are based upon the opinion that Luther and his early followers could not break away from the form of society recommended by Aristotle and the scholastic theologians. We call the tribute to the government "taxes," while Luther used the word "interest." If Luther could have used our terminology, he would have expressed himself very differently, no doubt. At any rate, it should be clear that he did not recommend the taking of twenty per cent interest on loans; and it has become clearer to the reader that, when Luther in December, 1516, said that the clergy and the government officials were permitted to "buy rents," he referred to what we call "tithes" and "taxes."

All of Luther's utterances after 1524 conform to his earlier opinions. In a letter addressed to Duke John Frederick of Saxony, dated June 18, 1524, he advised that a prince should favor the continuation of the old practice which compelled subjects to pay ten per cent of their income to the government. (This was in reality exactly what the Israelites did before they had a king to rule over them, for they were then ruled by a theocracy through the priesthood.) "This," says Luther, "would be the best form of interest, which would not be too great a burden for the *Zinsleut* [the people who pay the so-called *Zins,* or interest]. In case God gives more or less, the 'tenth' should accordingly be more or less. It would indeed be very well if the people paid one-fifth or one-sixth of their income, as Joseph had them do in Egypt. But since such orderly arrangement does not now prevail in the world, I say that it would be well if this *Zinskauf* [the buying of interest] be regulated by law. To abolish the practice entirely would not be right, for it might be so regulated

that it be made right. I do not advise that you prevent the people from paying the interest on loans. This is not a matter for a prince to settle by one of his own laws, for it is a common plague, accepted by everybody. Consequently, the practice should be tolerated, but on condition that the rate of interest shall not exceed four or five per cent.[30]

Similar thoughts appear in Luther's letter to Capito in Strasbourg, dated June 15, 1524; and in another addressed perhaps at the end of June, 1524 to Spalatin.[31] The law of Moses concerning the "tenth" is discussed at some length in a treatise entitled *The Opinion of Luther on the Law of Moses,* composed at about the same time as the three letters just mentioned.[32]

Very different is the tone of Luther's letter to the City Council of Danzig, dated May 5 or 7, 1525. "The law of Moses," says the author, "is dead and completely out of date, given as it was only to the Jews. We gentiles should obey the laws of our respective countries, as St. Peter says in Ch. V of his first Epistle [should be Ch. II, 13], 'Every ordinance of man.' But the Gospel is a spiritual law by which one cannot govern, but about which each person must decide for himself whether he will observe all of it or none of it. . . . The spiritual rule of the Gospel must therefore be separated from the external secular rule and the two must not be mixed with each other. The preacher shall proclaim the rule of the Gospel only with his mouth and let everyone follow the dictates of his own will. . . . To give an example, the taking of interest on loans is quite unevangelical, since Christ teaches, 'Lend without taking it back.' Here one must not go to an extreme and abolish every deviation. No one has the power or the right to do this, for it has arisen out of the ordinances of men, which St. Peter does not want to have made null and void; and one must give the interest to those who are entitled to it, whether or not the latter desire to follow the injunction of the Gospel. . . .

"Although the Gospel teaches us to let our goods be taken from us freely, he who compels me to do this seizes property that belongs

[30] M. Luther, *Werke,* Weimar ed., *Briefwechsel,* Vol. III (1933), p. 307. The same letter appears in the edition of Enders, IV, p. 354.

[31] *Briefw.,* III, p. 303, lines 3-11 (Latin); and p. 313, lines 7-16, also in Latin.

[32] See the correspondence of Luther edited by L. Enders and G. Kawerau, Vol. IV, No. 803, p. 355.

to me. If one wishes to justify the taking of interest, he may select one out of two kinds. The first is interest on loans given on security, such as fields, meadows, ponds, houses, etc., on which the average rate should be five per cent. . . . The other depends upon the means of the creditor. If he is moderatly rich and has been drawing interest for a long time, the debtor should ask for a reduction in the rate of interest, but if he is old and in straitened circumstances, let him receive the interest as long as he lives." [33]

In the year 1540 Luther first published his lengthy treatise entitled *Exhortation to the Pastors, to Preach Against Usury.*[34] This treatise was the direct result of a bad harvest in 1538 and the spring of 1539, and even more of speculation in grain by unscrupulous persons who were holding the grain for higher prices. In the vicinity of Wittenberg many of the poorer class were nearly starved to death, whereupon he requested the municipal government of Wittenberg to help them get food. The mayor forthwith appeared at Luther's home and explained to him that it was not the fault of the city council but that speculators were withholding the grain from the market. Luther then wrote to the Elector of Saxony, telling him that a serious drouth had curtailed the crops and the river Elbe was very low, but the real trouble was caused by speculators. At about the same time, that is in the spring of 1539, Luther composed his lengthy treatise, which is dated 1540, because it was published on January 1st of that year.

When the treatise is read in the light of the circumstances which caused its composition, it will be seen why Luther so severely criticized the speculators and why he was so pessimistic about human nature in general. He naturally begins with a discourse on what is meant by usury, the taking of interest on loaned capital, from which he exempts "the interest that can be bought and sold." [35] He is always consistent in this respect, and again, near the end of the treatise he says, "The interest that can be bought I have not had in mind."[36]

[33] *Werke, Briefwechsel,* Vol. III, pp. 484-486.

[34] *An die Pfarrherren wider den Wucher zu predigen, Vermahnung,* published in *Werke,* Vol. LI (1914), pp. 331-424.

[35] See his *Werke,* LI, p. 333: "Wir reden dis mal nichts von geben oder schenken, auch nicht von keuffen oder verkeuffen, noch vom Widderkeufflichem Zinse."

[36] *Werke,* LI, 423: "Den keufflichen zinse habe ich hie mit nicht gemeinet."

Luther avers that the whole world is full of sin and corruption, slander, infidelity, avarice and usury. You will find only one farmer who will pay his dues to the Church as a good Christian against one thousand who will not do so. Among the nobles and officials the ratio is one out of one hundred. People want Mammon to be their God. The apple in Paradise is sweet. Turks, soldiers and tyrants are bad people also, but they at least will let the populace live, and they admit that they are evil. A usurer, on the other hand, wants the whole world to perish with hunger, thirst and misery.

Other comments of interest are to be found in Luther's *Table Talks.* One of them is entitled, *On Usury,*[37] and it tells about the visit of Jakob Probst, Superintendent in Bremen, on June 14, 1542. He had been Luther's companion in the monastery, and he had received his Master's degree at Wittenberg in 1509. He and Luther discussed the usury in which the Netherlands and Flanders had been drowned. If a person takes five or six per cent, said Luther, and there is security given (called *Unterpfand* in the German version and *hypotheca* in the Latin version, hence the Dutch still call a mortgage a *hypotheek*), the taking of interest is permitted. The debtor must not be forced to return the loan until he is fully prepared, and the creditor takes all the risk. If the house burns or the crops fail, the creditor will receive no interest that year. This element of risk makes the taking of interest permissible. The emperor, however, is paying twelve per cent interest in his native country. This is terrible.

In another number of the *Table Talks,* also dated June 14, 1542,[38] Luther argues that now one may charge six or seven per cent interest, for prices are higher than a few decades ago. The rate of six per cent is likewise approved in the number of the Lauterbach collection, where Luther says, "The rate of six per cent does not seem to be unjust, for profits are generally twice as high as they used to be." [39] In one instance at least he goes so far as to approve of the rate of eight per cent, that is, in a sermon on Matthew XXIII, 25, preached about the year 1537. Again he claims that it is proper at

[37] See *Werke, Tischreden,* Vol. IV (1916), No. 4805, pp. 523-525.

[38] See *Werke, Tischreden,* Vol. V (1919), No. 5429, p. 146.

[39] *Werke, Tischreden,* Vol. V, No. 6164, p. 519: "Sex florens de 100 non mihi videtur iniustum, nam unus modius frumenti nunc duplo valet quam olim."

the present time, because prices have gone up.[40] The Catholic writer H. Grisar calls this "inconsistency" of Luther "tumultuous outpourings of his pen." [41] But it appears that Luther was merely trying to adjust himself to altered conditions in the economic world.

In order to understand why Luther seemed to be inconsistent, it will be necessary to read the whole passage in which he disscussed usury in this sermon on Matthew XXIII. Luther said: "If you have house and garden, wife and child, cultivable field, meadow, silver and gold; take care to keep it clean. Do not believe that you will be clean before God simply because you have not been punished by worldly decrees. The imperial law can often do nothing to punish such misdemeanor, because of the evil in this world. Usury and avarice have made such inroads that emperor and king can do nothing any more to check them. Some time ago people would sing, 'The merchant has become a nobleman.' But now the nobles and princes have become traders. It is not yet twenty years ago that one would say that to take ten guilders on a hundred was usury. Now the big fellows exact twenty or thirty per cent, and some of them get from forty to sixty per cent a year. The devil is in that game. Consequently, when one asks the emperor and the princes for help, they can do nothing, for they themselves are immersed in the whole scheme. The law has been violated and corrupted. We should be glad to approve of the rate of six per cent, and we would be satisfied even if seven or eight per cent interest were charged on loans. For prices are higher now. We would, however, require that there be security given in the form of a mortgage, and that the debtor may be permitted to redeem the mortgage."

After having explained that the rise in prices has been the result of widespread usury (in which respect he was wrong, since the influx of precious metals from America had been the chief cause), Luther repeats that the rich who murder the poor cover their crime with the cloak of respectability and consort with the princes of the land. His text is this, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." He prays that God

[40] See *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol. XLVII, p. 493; Erlangen ed., Vol. XLV, p. 7.

[41] H. Grisar, *Luther,* Vol. III, p. 593. Nevertheless, Grisar has done a better job than many Protestants.

may have mercy on the leading princes, for they are very guilty of usury. He says that he had had a discussion with one of them, who said that he did not have any more than the principal, and that he would use this to get the highest possible rate of interest. These men are robbers who rob in secret. "In case the princes agree with the law on maintaining the rate of five per cent, and if the borrower may buy his mortgage back, we will agree to add two or three per cent to the rate of five per cent. But during the past twenty years since I first preached against usury, it has come to pass that people will take fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, or sixty per cent; and now a person will lend ten thousand guilders in the expectation of making four thousand in the form of interest. Leipzig sucks both principalities dry. Just as a worm ruins an apple from within, so do cities lose their vitality through the practice of usury.

"We are to be the beggars among the usurers, and we are to let ourselves be robbed. The preachers preach against the abuse, but it does not do any good. Even the law and good princes cannot come to our rescue. People will say, 'The money is mine, and I may do with it what I please.' But you had better take note that woe will be cried over your soul. You may use your money, but not in order to harm your neighbor with it. If you are a chair-robber [a robber who robs when sitting on a chair, doing nothing but exact interest on his money], you have stolen the guilder just as well as you would have done if you had robbed some one in the woods. There are robbers in the cities and in the castles. Leipzig and other cities are robber cities. Woe is written above them in this text, and although they may appear to be clean and beautiful outwardly, and they may be called nobles, our text considers them robbers and says, 'You have robbed poor people and widows.' 'Well,' they may retort, 'we have the money, so what do we care what is said, as long as we get the money?' But remember that no matter how tough and strong you are, you will not be able to overthrow God in heaven. . . . Let each person accommodate himself to his own trade, so that he will inflict no injury upon some on else. . . . Our doctrine has lost its attraction for the rank and file of the people. The kettle is burned and dirty. The law has been violated. Consequently, God will have to send a Turk to punish us, or else the last judgment is to come. . . . Conditions are such that the emperor and the scholars are impotent

to remedy them. May God give the emperor and the princes the courage to correct this evil, lest the world come to an end. What the Jews have done in the past is mere child's play compared with this avarice and usury, which rules not only among the clergy but also among the secular powers."

It is not possible at this point to determine in what respects the great German reformer was reactionary and in which domain advanced. A comparison with John Calvin's viewpoints will clarify the problem considerably. Although Luther in 1542 referred to Aristotle, and repeated with the Greek philosopher, whom in 1520 he had called a "damned heathen", that "money is barren," it is only fair to examine the context. The same statement appears in the two numbers dated June 14, 1542. In both cases Luther argues that money does not beget money. If a pauper asks for a loan and has no property to give as security, what must be done? Luther argues that he "must live in his poverty. The rich must be exhorted to almsgiving, which will relieve the poverty of the less fortunate." In the other number the author says, "The purchaser should take all the risk." Thus we see that Luther was consistent until the end of his life, consistent in that he could not get away from his original objection to loans on interest without security in the form of real estate. [42].

[42] Professor E. G. Schwiebert of Valparaiso University shows in his excellent book, *Reformation Lectures delivered at Valparaiso University* (Valparaiso, Ind., 1937), that Luther in 1542 owned property which today would be worth nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (pp. 223-224), and he throws much welcome light on Luther's ability to husband his financial resources. In this respect at least, Luther was much more "modern" than was John Calvin.

Chapter III

THE ECONOMIC THEORIES OF CALVIN

John Calvin, as is well known, differed from Luther in that he was of Latin stock, belonged to the bourgeois class, spent much of his life in large and prosperous cities, and was twenty-six years younger. This difference in heredity and environment is commonly utilized as a well-nigh infallible criterion for establishing a definite line of demarcation between the two reformers. Luther the "peasant" could not help but be reactionary and opposed to capitalism, while Calvin the bourgeois was friendly to the modern spirit.

Max Weber's thesis on the relation between Calvinism and capitalism was modified by E. Troeltsch, who reasoned thus: "It was just because the economic conditions at Geneva were so bourgeois, and on such a small scale, that Capitalism was able to steal into the Calvinistic ethic, while it was rejected by the Catholic and the Lutheran ethic. That is officially expressed, properly speaking, in the important fact that Calvin and the Calvinistic ethic rejected the canonical veto on usury and the scholastic theory of money, and on the contrary supported a doctrine of money, credit, and usury which were nearer to the modern economic idea, with limitations, certainly, with which we shall have to deal presently. . . .

"The exhortation to continual industry in labour, combined with the limitation of consumption and of luxury, produced a tendency to pile up capital, which for its part—in the necessity of its further utilization in work and not in enjoyment—necessitated an ever-increasing turnover. The duty of labour, coupled with the ban on luxury, worked out 'economically as the impulse to save,' and the impulse to save had the effect of building up capital." [1]

[1] E. Troeltsch, *The Social Ethic of the Christian Churches,* Vol. II, pp. 643-645. Troeltsch devotes a remarkably small section of his book to the relation between Calvinism and capitalism when one bears in mind how much more important this subject is

Those who have carefully studied Luther's remarks about money and interest, as well as those about the necessity of hard work and of thrift, will wonder why Calvin's views, which are almost identical, assisted the swift growth of capitalism, while those of Luther had much less effect. Is it perhaps because Calvin devoted more attention than did Luther to economic questions? It must be so, for Troeltsch remarks that Calvin's letters "deal constantly with the interests of finance, trade, and industry (from the point of view of the manual labourer)." [2] Nevertheless, Luther filled one hundred folio pages with his comments on the various aspects of capitalism over against fewer than fifty written by Calvin, who certainly was as voluminous a writer as was Luther.

"The practical situation in Geneva," so continues Troeltsch, "was the decisive turning-point: Calvin was convinced that this 'anti-Mammon' Christian spirit could express itself and maintain its existence within the sphere of a society which was based essentially upon a money economy, upon trade and industry." Troeltsch also alleges that Calvin regarded "profit as a sign of Divine approval." He makes this remarkable conclusion: "This conception of the 'calling' and of labour, with its taboo on idleness of every kind, with its utilization of every chance of gain, and its confidence in the blessing of God, now, however, to a great extent approached the commercial professions and the business of making money. It laid the foundation of a world of specialized labour, which taught men to work for work's sake, and in so doing it produced our present-day bourgeois way of life, the fundamental psychological principles which gave it birth."

Attention has been drawn to these words of the famous German writer, because they have exerted a tremendous influnce in Great Britain and this country, although neither Max Weber nor his

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supposed to be than the connection between Lutheranism and capitalism. While his treatment of the second subject is upon the whole excellent, that of the former is very superficial and misleading. Basing his treatment very largely upon the erroneous idea that Calvin's early followers induced the City Council in Geneva to fix the rate of interest and "gave their judgment in favour of the erection of a State Bank" (when they did exactly the opposite), he presents his first quotation from Calvin's works in the Latin language, as it is supposed to appear in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. XXXVIII, p. 247, although the passage here is in French and is to be found on col. 247.

[2] E. Troeltsch, *l.c.,* II, 642.

celebrated follower had ever thoroughly studied the life and thought of John Calvin. Consequently, it has been inevitable that very strange opinions about the Lutheran and Calvinistic conceptions of capitalism were produced in this country, including the extraordinary theories on this subject concocted by so well-known a writer and lecturer as Reinbold Niebuhr, as quoted in the *Calvin Forum* of August, 1937: "Lutheranism is called a *Weltfeindlich,* quietistic religion, which emphasized 'the kingdom within' and paid little attention to the social situation. Calvinism is *Weltfreundlich.* It influenced politics and economics, made 'a valuable contribution to social progress' and became 'the spiritual foundation upon which the whole structure of modern civilization has been built.' . . . 'The love and reverence for personality which is the basis of the ethics of Jesus,' Niebuhr claims to be totally lacking in Calvinism."

Let us also briefly note what Max Weber himself had said about Calvinism and capitalism, for Niebuhr has obviously copied some of Weber's ideas on the subject: "In Calvin's theology the Father in heaven of the New Testament, so human and understanding . . . is gone. . . . Though the sacraments had been ordained by God for the increase of His glory, and must hence be scrupulously observed, they are not a means to the attainment of grace." And Weber even goes so far as to aver that in the Calvinist religion no priest was required, "because the chosen one can understand the Word of God only in his own heart." [3] This means that the elect of God must spend his time building up capital for the glory of God, work chiefly for work's sake, save all he can, and look around for signs of his election in the amount of profit he can make with his business. The Lutherans and the Catholics, on the other hand, who did not believe in predestination, did not work nearly so hard nor try to save so much money. Hence the poverty of Germany and Italy in the seventeenth century as contrasted with the prosperity in the Netherlands and England. (Scotland, however, is carefully omitted as a rule, for good reasons.)

Now it is one of the most remarkable facts in the career of John Calvin that, after he had spent fifteen years in succession in Geneva (1541-56), he still said nothing of the slightest importance about economic theories or capitalism in general, in his most famous work,

[3] M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930), pp. 103-104.

The Institutes of the Christian Religion. Luther's most widely discussed treatise, the *Address to the German Nobility,* on the other hand, contains startling comments about the wickedness of the rich bankers, the evil results of usury, the need of hard work, and the necessity of frugal living.

Professor Henri Hauser has justly remarked that "when one speaks of the influence which Calvin was able to exercise upon the evolution of the thought and practice of economics in modern times, he thinks first of the central problem: that of usury, or the taking of interest on loans." [4] For this reason we shall follow his example by studying this problem first of all.

In 1556 Calvin issued his commentaries on the book of Deuteronomy, and in the next year he expressed his views on usury in the commentary on Psalm XV. In 1563, that is one year before his death, he composed the commentaries on Ezekiel, published first in 1565, in which he also discoursed at length on the question of usury. The three pertinent commentaries on Deut. XXIII, Psalm XV, and Ezekiel XVIII are analyzed here first, for they reveal the thoughts of Calvin when he had the leisure to express his innermost thoughts. The same may be said about the commentary on the eighth commandment, under Exodus XXII, to be found in the *Harmony of the Pentateuch,* which Calvin wrote in 1563. This will be discussed with the other three.

In commenting upon Deut. XXIII, 19-20, Calvin observes that the Jews were not permitted to charge interest on loans among themselves, but they could charge the gentiles. Why were the Jews prohibited from making profit on loans among themselves? Because they were the people of God. "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury." But even this is not licit. It is merely permitted to go unpunished.[5] We are here urged not to indulge in evil practices. Now let us see what we may learn from the reason why the Jews should not exact interest among themselves. "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother." Who is our brother? We know that Jesus Christ came to reconcile us all with God, and thus we are

[4] See his article, "L'Economie calvinienne," in *Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme français,* LXXXIVe Année (1935), p. 228.

[5] See Calvin's *Opera,* Vol. XXVIII, in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. LVI (Brunswick, 1885), col. 116: "Et ainsi en ce passage, quand il est dit: *Tu pourras ronger les estrangers d'usure,* Dieu ne fait point cela licite: mais il le laisse impuni."

members of one community, as Christ has declared that we are adopted children. Since we are all brethren it follows that whatever was regarded as equitable among the Jews is equitable among us.

Twice Calvin refers to the advice given by the prophet Ezekiel, and we shall presently quote some passages from Calvin's commentary on Ezekiel XVIII. God has not said that one may make no profit at all. What then must one do? It would not do to give up all trade. But we may not enrich ourselves at the expense of our neighbor when we are helping him with a loan. God has in mind that the poor must be aided by their more fortunate brethren. Calvin points out next that although Moses speaks of receiving goods instead of money as interest upon the loan, goods are the equivalent of money.

"Thus people have invented beautiful kinds of contracts, in order to give respectability to their evil practices. As I have said, those who take no money for their profit can escape the charge of usury. And why is that? This superficial reason is given: that money does not beget money. Now, I do not take money, but people give me so much grain on a certain sum of money. Is not the grain the substance of the poor? And have I not robbed him of his food and substance? He will have nothing to eat, because I have been cruel enough to seize his food. And still could I say that I am not a usurer? No, this sort of thing is not usury. They produce a piece of parchment, which is the contract. Now the sun passes over the earth, and we see its rays; do you then think that God cannot see that far? And can we imagine that we can hide our deeds under a piece of paper or parchment?

"The commandment says, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Stealing is the act of taking anything from our neighbor to increase our own property, be it through fraud or violence. When we derive profit at the expense of our neighbor, and when others seize all they can, they place their feet upon the throat of the poor and tyrannize over them. . . . We conclude that usury is illicit profit, whether in the form of money or of grain. . . . It seems that the courts usually favor those who are fraudulent. . . . There is the law which says that five per cent interest may be charged. Now this is a general law, inasmuch as the magistrates cannot determine how much each person should

charge. Yet they command that the rate shall be five per cent. Why? Because in this way nobody will charge more than that. Is it now permitted to conclude that it shall always be proper and fair to charge five per cent? Not so. For if a man should come to me who is in need of financial assistance, and I should lend him money on interest, I shall appear before God as a usurer. . . . Suppose that a certain person wants to borrow one hundred dollars from me and offers a mortgage on a piece of property which is worth two hundred dollars. The contract is drawn up, and I agree to take merely that which I am permitted according to the law and the courts, or else nothing at all. This, however, will turn out to be a sale of the property. And how? I have lent my money, and if it is not returned to me, I have bought therewith a piece of property. And if there is still more, that will be given to me outright. In that manner I squeeze the throat of the poor man, I have him in my power, and I may say to him, 'Sell this piece of property to me.' Nevertheless, will God not be a judge among us?

"As I have said, one must not place too much stress upon mere words, but rather consider the things themselves. So we had better not argue that we have not been guilty of extortion before God, since we have deprived nobody illicitly of his property, seeing that the law permitted it. . . . If, then, we consider this question, whether all usury is permitted, we must not so much look upon the word *usury,* but upon the intention of God. We must examine the degree of equity which resides in the law. Moreover, we must heed the words of Jesus, not to do unto others that which we would not want others to do unto us. Upon that, He said, depend all the law and the prophets."

In the commentary on Psalm XV, 5, Calvin reasons thus: "In this verse David enjoins the godly neither to oppress their neighbors by usury, nor to suffer themselves to be corrupted with bribes to favor unrighteous causes. With respect to the first clause, as David seems to condemn all kinds of usury in general, and without exception, the very name has everywhere been held in detestation. But crafty men have invented specious names under which to conceal vice; and thinking by this artifice to escape, they have plundered with greater excess than if they had lent on usury openly and avowedly. . . . It may be asked whether all kinds of usury are to be put into the de-

nunciation and regarded as alike unlawful? If we condemn all without distinction, there is a danger lest many, seeing themselves brought into such a strait, as to find that sin must be incurred, in whatever way they can turn themselves, may be rendered bolder by despair, and may rush headlong into all kinds of usury, without choice or discrimination. On the other hand, whenever we concede that something may be lawfully done this way, many will give themselves loose reins, thinking that a liberty to exercise usury, without control or moderation, has been granted to them. . . .

"With respect to usury, it is scarcely possible to find in the world a usurer who is not at the same time an extortioner, and addicted to unlawful and dishonorable gain. Accordingly, Cato of old justly placed the practice of usury and the killing of men in the same rank of criminality, for the object of this class of people is to suck the blood of other men. It is also a strange and shameful thing that, while other men obtain the means of their subsistence with much toil, while husbandmen fatigue themselves by their daily occupations, and artisans serve the community by the sweat of their brow, and merchants not only employ themselves in labors but also expose themselves to many inconveniences and dangers—that money-mongers should sit at their ease without doing anything, and receive tribute from the labor of other people. Besides, we know that generally it is not the rich who are devoured by their usury but rather the poor who ought to be relieved instead. . . . It follows that the gain which he who lends his money upon interest acquires, without doing injury to anyone, is not to be included under the head of unlawful usury." [6]

The commentary on Ezekiel XVIII is very clear: "In this case the Prophet seems to condemn all kinds of interest, and exaggerates the weight of the sentence ('since he has not given on usury and has not received increase'), when he adds increase, that is, whatever gains the avaricious strive for. So also in the XVth Psalm, where a just mode of living is prescribed for us, David mentions among other things, 'who has not lent money on usury.' It seems, then, from these two places, that usury is in itself unlawful. But because God's

[6] The translated passages have been reproduced from *Commentary on the Book of Psalms by John Calvin,* translated by the Rev. J. Anderson, Vol. I, Edinburgh (1845), pp. 212-214.

law embraces complete and perfect justice, we must hold that interest, unless it is opposed to God's law, is not altogether to be condemned, otherwise ignominy would clearly attach to the law of God if it did not prescribe to us a true and complete rule of living justly. But in the law there is that perfection to which nothing can be added.

"If then we wish to determine whether interest is unlawful, we must come to the rule of the law, which cannot deceive us. But we shall not find all interest contrary to the law, and hence it follows that interest is not always to be condemned. Here, too, we must remember that we must regard the subject rather than the words for men trifle by their own cavillings, but God does not admit of such fallacies. Hence, as I said, the substance ought to be weighed, because the words alone will not enable us to decide whether interest be sometimes lawful or not. For example, among the Latins the word for interest is honorable in itself and has no disgrace attached to it, but that for usury is odious. What causes disgrace to be thus hidden under it? They fancied that they abhorred usurers, hence the general term 'interest' contains within it all kinds of usury, and there was nothing so cruel, so unjust, and so barbarous which was not covered by that pretence. Now since the name for interest was unknown to the French, that for usury became detestable. Hence the French devised a new craftiness by which they could deceive God. For since no one could bear the name of usury, they used 'interest' instead. But what does this mean but something that interests us, [which is not true] and thus it signifies all kinds of repayment for loans, for there was no kind of interest among the ancients which is not now comprehended in this word.

"Now since we have said that the interest cannot be totally and without exception condemned (for we must not play upon words but treat the real point), we must see how far it can be proved not to be reckoned a crime. First of all, in a well-regulated state no usurer is tolerated. . . . But anyone may receive interest without being a professed usurer. For example, a person may have capital and put out a part of it on loan, and thus receive interest. And if he do that once he will not be called a usurer, so that we must consider when and from whom a person exacts interest. . . . It is always wrong to exact usury from a poor man. But if a man is rich and has

money of his own, and has a very good estate and a large patrimony, and should borrow money of his neighbor, will that neighbor commit sin by receiving a profit from the loan of his money? Another borrower is the richer of the two, and might do without it and suffer no loss. But he wishes to buy a farm and enjoy its fruits. Why should the creditor be deprived of his rights when his money brings profit to a neighbor richer than himself?" [7]

Having seen what Calvin thought about lending money on interest in the last year of his life when writing the commentary on Ezekiel, we shall now learn what were his words in the commentary on the last books of the Pentateuch, written also in 1563. He was discussing the eighth commandment, and had reached Exodus XXII, 25, "If thou lend money to any of my people." Calvin wrote thus: "Humanity ought to be very greatly regarded in the matter of loans, especially when a person, being reduced to extremities, implores a rich man's compassion; for this is, in point of fact, the genuine trial of our charity, when in accordance with Christ's precept we lend to those of whom we expect no return (Luke VI, 35). The question here is not as to usury, as some have falsely thought, as if He commanded us to lend gratuitously, and without any hope of gain; but, since in lending, private advantage is most generally sought, and therefore we neglect the poor, and only lend our money to the rich, from whom we expect some compensation, Christ reminds us that, if we seek to acquire the favor of the rich, we afford in this way no proof of our charity or mercy. Hence He proposes another sort of liberality, which is plainly gratuitous, in giving assistance to the poor, not only because our loan is a perilous one, but because they cannot make a return in kind. . . .

"The question now is whether usury is evil in itself; and surely that which heathen even have detested appears to be by no means lawful to the children of God. . . . But when we come to an accurate decision as to the thing itself, our determination must be derived from nowhere else than the universal rule of justice, and especially from the declaration of Christ, on which hang the law and the prophets, 'Do not unto others what ye would not have done to yourselves' (Matthew VII, 12). . . . I have, then, admonished men

[7] See Calvin's *Commentaries on the First Twenty Chapters of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel,* translated by Th. Myers, Vol. II (Edinburgh, 1850), pp. 226-228.

that the fact itself is simply to be considered that all unjust gains are ever displeasing to God. . . . But if we would form an equitable judgment, reason does not suffer us to admit that all usury is to be condemned without exception. . . . Many cases occur daily in which, as far as equity is concerned, usury is no worse than purchase.

"Nor will that subtle argument of Aristotle prevail that usury is unnatural, because money is barren and does not beget money; for such a cheat as I have spoken of might make much profit by trading with another man's money, and the purchaser of the farm might in the meantime reap and gather his vintage. But those who think differently may object that we must abide by God's judgment, when He generally prohibits all usury to His people. I reply that the question is only one for the poor, and consequently, if we have to do with the rich, that usury is freely permitted.

"I should indeed be unwilling to take usury under my patronage, and I wish the name itself were banished from the world. . . . At the present time no rapacity is more cruel than that which imposes a payment upon debtors without any mention of usury. For instance, if a poor man should ask the loan of six measures of wheat, the creditor will require seven to be repaid. . . . This profit will not be called usury, because no money will pass, but God . . . shows that this plague of usury extends to various things." [8]

In a letter addressed on April 28, 1556, to a brother in the faith, Calvin answered a question concerning the lending of money on interest. He said that in Geneva the municipal council had fixed a definite rate of interest, but that this did not by any means permit anyone to lend money on interest to the poor. He excused himself for being rather vague about the whole matter, for he realized the dangers which lurked in the path of those who lent money on interest. The same hesitancy is displayed in a letter dated Jan. 10, 1562, and written to Francis Morel, pastor of the church at Gien, who had asked Calvin whether it was permissible for a minister to lend money on interest. Calvin replied that such a practice should not be summarily condemned. On the other hand, considering how much calumny and scandal had been caused by the charging of in-

[8] See Calvin's *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses arranged in the Form of a Harmony,* translated by the Rev. Ch. W. Bingham, Vol. III (Edinburgh, 1854), pp. 126-133.

terest on loans, he abstains from answering the question either in the affirmative or the negative. "The surest and most expedient way would be not to enter into such practices or such contracts. . . . But if one is content to lend money to some merchant who is honest, it is well to abide by his faith and loyalty in order to determine what is an equitable profit, depending on how God causes him to prosper in his work."[9]

Thus far we have not seen Calvin make any remarks which did not remind us forcibly of Luther's pronouncements. If all of Calvin's commentaries on the Bible had come down to us without the name of the author having been attached to them, and if we had not been informed repeatedly by numerous authorities on economics and on theology that Calvin made a great step in advance of Luther, it would have seemed natural to guess that Luther had much to do with their authorship. Since even E. Troeltsch grants that "the fundamental doctrines of Luther were therefore also the fundamental doctrines of Calvin," [10] there can be little harm in surmising that Calvin depended upon Luther's earlier verdict in making up his mind about the leading economic questions of his time. We must conclude with Troeltsch that "all the distinctive features of Calvinism have only been evolved out of the main stock of the ideal which it holds in common with Lutheranism."

The quotations from Calvin's works just given sound very much like the interesting letter which Luther in 1525 addressed to the

[9] *Opera,* Vol. X, First Part, in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. XXXVIII, col. 264: "Satis tutum non est si ad tuam quaestionem simpliciter respondeam . . . Quare me excusam apud te velim, si nihil hic certum, ut exspectas, praescripsero. Est quidem in hac civitate certis legibus modus constitutus. Sed non inde consequitur ad eum etiam modum fructum pecuniae exigere creditori bona conscientia licere a paupere." For the reply to Pastor Morel, see *Opera,* XIX, *CR,* XLVII, col. 245-246: "Mais dautre part quand ie regarde a combien de calomnies et scandales cela est suiet, et aussi que plusieurs estendent quelque condition moderee pour se dispenser plus quil ne leur est permis, ie mabstiendraye volontiers de responder sur ceste question. Le plus seur et expedient seroit de ne point entrer en telles pratiques ou contracts." Professor H. Hauser, in the article mentioned above, quotes from the second letter, but gives the source of the other (see p. 229 of the article and note 2 on that page). He also refers to a letter written by Calvin to the Fleming Utenhove, who was living in England in 1549, and wanted to know whether the law of Henry VIII, permitting lending of money at ten per cent was right. Calvin replied that the king had such a right, and that one could without harm obey such a law. See also Calvin's *Opera,* Vol. XIII, *BR,* Vol. XLI, col. 462, where Utenhove's question appears. The reply by Calvin is not in the *Corp. Ref.*

[10] E. Troeltsch, *l.c.,* Vol. II, p. 581.

magistrates of Danzig, and also like Luther's own commentaries, especially that on the Gospel of Matthew, composed about the year 1537, to which reference was made in the preceding chapter. Luther was much more interested in economic questions than was Calvin, which must seem strange to those who strongly emphasize the influence of environment upon the genesis of the human mind. The sources must and can speak for themselves.

We must now turn to the study of the verdict Calvin sent to Claude de Sachins in the year 1545, for this verdict has often been hailed as the "turning point in the economic history of modern Europe." [11] Much attention was paid to this composition by H. Hauser in his well-known book on the Rise of Capitalism,[12] and the treatise in question is indeed interesting. The treatise is entitled, *De Usuris,* that is, *On Usury.* In the *Corpus Reformatorum* it fills just a little over two pages.[13]

The treatise *On Usury* contains the germ of much that was explained at length in the commentaries just discussed. In the first place, says Calvin, there is no passage in the Bible where usury in every form is totally condemned. For the statement by Christ in Luke VI, 35, has been wrongly interpreted as a rule. [This remark we have noted above.] It is our concern primarily to protect and assist the poor. We do not read in Luke VI that usury is completely condemned. The law of Moses in Deut. XXIII, 19, is political, and we are not constrained by it beyond equity and human reason. It were well if all usury were exterminated in the whole world, but since this is impossible, we must yield to common utility. Tyranny and deceit usually accompany usury. The prophet Ezekiel justly warned against usury.

The arguments adduced by St. Ambrose and St. Chrysostom are too superficial in Calvin's opinion, namely, that money does not beget money. (We saw above that afterward Calvin properly quoted Aristotle, who had coined the phrase.) Why does money not compare with a house which one rents, or a field which produces something also? "How would merchants increase their stock? They

[11] See H. Hauser's article, p. 228 and p. 229.

[12] *Les Débuts du Capitalisme* (Paris, 1927), pp. 45-47. The whole of Chapter II, called "Les idées économiques de Calvin," merits careful study.

[13] Vol. XXXVIII, col. 245-249.

will use their industry, you reply. Certainly, I will confess what children can see, that is, that money lying in a box does not beget money. There it is indeed sterile. And no one will borrow money unless he intends to work with it. That is because the profit is not made with the money itself but with its revenue. We must, therefore, conclude that the subtle arguments of past writers, when closely examined, will evaporate, for they have no solid foundation. I gather that one must not judge usury by quoting a certain sentence in the Bible but solely according to the rule of equity.

"The problem will be made clearer by using an example. There is a certain rich man who has plenty of property and income but no cash at the moment. There is another person who owns less property and has less income but happens to possess more cash. The first party goes to the second and asks for a loan and offers some of his property as security.[14] The security or mortgage renders the loan more permissible and acceptable than other loans. Why is this just and honest contract false and evil?" Calvin actually goes so far as to say that the debtor offers a part of his property as security and still is willing to pay interest on the loan. What could be more amicable than that? asks Calvin. Why quibble about words?

But Calvin still is not satisfied. He has to make a number of reservations, saying that one must not charge interest of the poor, seek no gain at the expense of anyone, remember the injunctions of Christ to be kind to one's neighbor, see to it that the debtor and creditor share equally in the profit, follow the guidance of God's Word, consider the public welfare, and do not exceed the limit set by public laws.

It seems remarkable that such keen thinkers as Max Weber and E. Troeltsch, not to mention the legion of British and American imitators, did not have the sagacity to see that Calvin's arguments resembled Luther's opinions in almost every word. Twenty-one years before Calvin penned this letter on usury, Luther had explained at great length that it was just and fair, and also in keeping with the spirit of Christ, that a person paid interest on loans when security was given. He constantly talked of houses and fields that

[14] The Latin original has here: "Ut fundus ex illa emptus ipsi in hypothecam subiiceretur." In other words, the owner of the property gives a mortgage, exactly as Luther had continually insisted upon.

should be offered, and Calvin also speaks of a house and a field, which one could rent. The interest corresponded to rent.

We may note another remarkable phenomenon. In 1545 Calvin ascribed the phrase, "Money is sterile," to St. Ambrose and St. Chrysostom; in the commentary on Deuteronomy, composed in the winter of 1555-1556, he says that some people use this phrase; and finally, in 1563 he gives Aristotle credit. Could this be because Luther, in two of his *Table Talks,* both dated June 14, 1542, as we saw, recognized Aristotle as the author of the phrase? This point is worth investigating, for it has long been believed that Calvin was the first of the early Protestants to break with Aristotle. At any rate, it must be concluded that there has been far too much talk about Calvin and Luther without quotation from the original sources. Such loose statements as, "Calvin believed that this or that should be done," without any words from Calvin himself on the subject, will get us nowhere.

There is nothing in the works of Luther to show that twenty years before Calvin repudiated Aristotle's theory about money being sterile, Luther had not done exactly the same thing. Luther never said that he objected to the practice of merchants who borrowed money in order to enlarge their respective firms. Calvin, it is true, remarked that he did not see how merchants could increase their stock if they were not permitted to borrow money. But are we to assume that when Luther recommended to the city council of Danzig that the citizens of that city lend money on interest, he insisted that such loans could only be made to farmers in the country? Are we to infer that no business man who needed money had any real estate or its equivalent? It certainly requires an enormous lot of erroneous thinking to prove a theory which is fundamentally unsound.

The following points of agreement may be noted between Luther's views in the years 1520, 1524 and 1525, and Calvin's opinion as expressed in the letter on usury, dated 1545. First, the Mosaic law and all other passages in the Old Testament are intended for the Jews, and not necessarily for the gentiles. Secondly, no statement to be found anywhere in the Bible can be construed as condemning every form of lending money on interest. Thirdly, a Christian (for Luther and Calvin have only Christians in mind) is to be subject to the laws and regulations of the country or city in which he is resid-

ing. Fourthly, no matter what those laws say, it is prohibited to charge interest of a poor person. Fifthly, one must constantly bear in mind the injunction of Christ, not to do unto others what one does not want done to himself. Sixthly, the proper rate of interest is five per cent, but in special cases it is permissible to charge up to eight per cent. Seventhly, the ideal way is to loan money on security, in the form of real estate. Eighthly, Aristotle's dictum, "Money is sterile," is to be interpreted to mean that money buried in a box is indeed sterile, and nobody would be so foolish as to pay interest on such money. Ninthly, it were well if all manner of usury were abolished from the face of the earth, for the name *usury* has rightly earned for itself a very bad reputation. However, the word interest, newly introduced, describes a practice which has been generally accepted since the first half of the fifteenth century. Consequently, the Christian will do well to abide by this well-established custom. Tenthly, the desire for personal gain must always remain subordinate to that Christian spirit of brotherly love which seeks to aid the poor and the outcasts, for they are to receive all the property and profit which exceed one's moderate needs.

Emile Doumergue says in the fifth volume of his admirable biography of John Calvin that he cannot understand how a scholar like Max Weber, highly revered as he is in every country of western Europe, could have distorted the Calvinist spirit so amazingly as he did in playing havoc with the doctrine of predestination and its social consequences.[15] As I have indicated above, it is sheer folly to infer that all the Calvinists were interested in was to work directly for the glory of God. A careful study of Calvin's works shows plainly that concern for one's neighbor's welfare was the guiding factor in the whole problem of usury, and of business in general. In this respect there is no fundamental difference between Calvin and Luther, or between Calvin and the Catholics. Weber's followers, in their anxiety to prove his main thesis, have set up an artificial group of differences between the two leading reformers which does not improve the reputation of the thesis.

Professor C. H. Moehlman of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, who is one of the most successful teachers of church history in this country, points out the popularity of the Weber-Troeltsch

[15] *Jean Calvin, Les hommes et les choses de son temps* (Lausanne, 1917), p. 627.

theory in his excellent guide-book for the study of church history, where he says: "Weber was a pioneer in a field wherein many walk freely today. . . . Calvinism accepted all the consequences of predestination. The primary effect of taking seriously this pathetically inhuman religious hypothesis was a profound sense of inner isolation for each individual. Each man was taking his separate trail to God. . . . Troeltsch in a series of studies not only generally endorsed the hypothesis of Weber but added interesting original observations. . . . Archdeacon Cunningham likewise lent his support to the main contentions of Weber: 'Calvinism allowed free play to the commercial spirit. The attitude of Calvinism to commercial life was ultimately due to the deliberate acceptance of the Old Testament as the rule of conduct in a Christian society; but the connection was strengthened by the conditions of the community in which Calvinism was first planted and the atmosphere in which it flourished.' " [16]

Those who have read the opinions of Calvin and Luther on the Mosaic law may well wonder where Troeltsch and Archdeacon Cunningham got the idea that Calvin wanted his followers to obey it rather than the laws instituted by their respective governments. Let us now see how much the conditions in the city of Geneva under Calvin's rule contributed to the rise of modern capitalism.

"The school of Heidelberg," says Doumergue, "knows much about neo-Calvinism in England and America, but about the Calvinism of Calvin they know almost nothing more than what they have gleaned from second-hand sources." [17] This is very true, and it applies especially to Troeltsch, the best mind in that school. One might wonder, continues Doumergue, whether Calvin was a Calvinist. Again, very true, for both John Wesley and Benjamin Franklin are quoted to show what Calvinism was, or at least what it had done to make modern capitalism possible.

It is generally assumed that the city council in Geneva was induced by Calvin to permit the lending of money on interest, fixing the rate at five per cent; and that shortly after Calvin's death the

[16] *The Story of Christianity in Outline* (Rochester, N.Y., 1930), pp. 195-209. The amount of space devoted here to our problem shows that its importance has become fully realized in this country.

[17] E. Doumergue, *l.c.*, Vol. V, p. 639.

Calvinist pastors recommended to the city council that a bank of exchange be instituted. Both of these erroneous statements seem to have carried more weight with Weber's followers than the words and actions of Calvin himself. Moreover, it is said, as we saw, that Calvin's letters continually refer to matters of industry and commerce, but Troeltsch, who made this remark, pointed out only one such letter.

"Money in itself is good," said Calvin.[18] "If we acquire possessions in gold and silver," he continued, "it is our duty not to appropriate the goods of other people but to do good to our neighbors." [19] About rich persons he said this: "All the rich, when they have property with which they can be of service to others, are here just as magistrates, or officers, of God, to do what seems to them proper, that is, to assist their neighbors. . . . Those to whom God has given much grain and wine, are to offer part of these goods to those who are in need of the same.[20] . . . God commands that those who have an abundance of possessions, always keep their hands open for helping the poor. . . . But the latter must be patient, and they have no right to pillage the wealthy, even though the government is slow to punish them. . . . If the rich do not acquit themselves of their duty, they will have to give an account of their inhumane actions, but this will be before the heavenly judge. . . . God has distributed this world's goods as He has seen fit, and even the richest of all people, no matter how bad they may be, shall not be robbed of their possessions by those in direst need." [22]

Especially significant are these words: "If the rich are so inhumane as to let the poor starve to death, they will render an account thereof. . . . Nevertheless, the poor must be patient, so that they will abstain from every malice, from all manner of theft, from every form of pillage." [23] Calvin is much more severe and strict in his interpret-

[18] Commentary on Matthew XIX, 24; see *Opera,* Vol. XLV, in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. LXXIII, col. 542: "Divitias sua natura minime obstare."

[19] *Opera,* LIII, *CR,* LXXXI, col. 581. This is the sermon on I Timothy VI, 9.

[20] *Opera,* XXVIII, in *CR,* LVI, col. 205: "Tous les riches donc, quand ils ont dequoy bien faire, il est certain qu'ils sont là comme officiers de Dieu, et qu'ils exercent ce qui luy est propre: c'est assavoir d'aider à vivre à leurs prochains." See also col. 199 and 138-140.

[22] *Opera,* XXVIII, *CR,* LVI, col. 199-200; also *Opera,* XXVII, *CR,* LV, col. 338-340.

[23] *Opera,* XXVIII, *BR,* LVI, col. 199-200: "Si les riches ne s'acquittent de leur de-

ation of some of the biblical injunctions than was Thomas Aquinas, whose view was noted above. Calvin left no room for convenient exceptions and reservations. He did not enable his followers, as certain famous speakers in the United States have recently done, to interpret the Eighth Commandment to suit their own convenience, with remarks to the effect that if the owner is unreasonably unwilling to part with his property, those who need some of it very badly are free to take their share. Calvin reasoned that, even when the poor starve to death, they must leave their fate to God, who will recompense them.

It is not without reason that the recrudescence of orthodox Calvinism in the Netherlands during the past fifty years has been marshalled under the banner of the political party which is fittingly called the Anti-Revolutionary Party. These earnest Christians still cling to the high ethical standards preached by the founder of the Church, who commanded His faithful to love their enemies and to do good to those who hated them, even to death. It is not without reason, either, that when the Second International Congress of Calvinists met in the city of Amsterdam in the year 1934, all the discussions centered around the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. Here the leading Calvinist scholars from Scotland, Germany, France, England, Hungary, Switzerland, Austria, the United States and the Union of South Africa amplified the teachings of their spiritual father, John Calvin. They applied the doctrine in question to many fields of human endeavor, including the rise of modern capitalism.

Professor D. Maclean of Edinburgh opened his lecture with these significant words: "Reverent religion and strong men are the product of the majestic view of God which is created by belief in divine sovereignty. One thing only a true Calvinist should fear, and that thing is sin. . . . But this fear does not imply human powerlessness." He continued in this vein: "When, in our time, militant atheism, semi-religious naturalism and sublimated humanism are vigorously striving for domination over the bodies and souls of

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voir, qu'ils soyent si inhumains de laisser mourir les povres d'indigence, ils en rendront conte: mais ce sera devant le Iuge celeste. Cependant il faut que les povres soyent patiens, qu'ils s'abstiennent de toute malice, de toute rapine, de tout pillage."

people everywhere, can revived Calvinism, under God, repeat its past glorious victories to the eternal glory of God?" [24]

The Rev. E. C. Unmack of London made these remarks: "To the believer in the absolute sovereignty of the eternal God, the Bible is not only verbally inspired, but is the Book through which God continues to speak. . . . The sovereignty of God in the next place brings with it the direct and absolute responsibility of the individual to that sovereign God." [25] Professor A. Anema of the Free University of Amsterdam, stated in his lecture that "A Calvinist feels aversion to a weak and hesitating government; its task is to exercise power and to maintain order. He abhors slackness and weakness in the performance of duties which are imposed by God." [26] And referring to the economic depression which threw a dark shadow over the Dutch people in the years 1930 to 1934, Anema said: "When our country was lately brought to a bad pass by the economic crisis, it was a Calvinist, true to type, who succeeded in uniting around him the various political parties, the socialists forming the only exception." The Dutch professor did not elaborate on the important point that the socialists alone refused to support the Calvinist prime minister, who "is strongly maintaining authority and at the same time thoroughly respecting the rights of the people." A European audience does not need any explanation of this point. In the United States, on the other hand, many scholars believe that there is a close affinity between Calvinism and socialism. Every sound Calvinist in Europe can prove to these American authorities in a few minutes that the latter are grossly mistaken in their viewpoint. In our last chapter we shall discuss this problem more fully.

The socialists have for a long time been the arch-enemies of Calvinism in Europe. They have been enemies for the same reason that capitalism is the enemy of Calvinism, for Calvin and his devoted followers were ever aware of the tenor of Christ's urgent exhortations to concentrate their chief attention upon the things of the spirit. So they willingly left their homes in England to go first to the Netherlands and then to New England, as will be pointed out in a

[24] See the *Reports* of the Congress, published by Martinus Nijhoff at The Hague (1935), pp. 122, 123.

[25] *Reports,* pp. 131, 132.

[26] *Reports,* p. 64.

following chapter. Calvinism, unlike capitalism and socialism, knows far higher powers than those of the purse and of the stomach. It recognizes the need of worshiping God as a spirit. Consequently, it permits no more exceptions to the divine commandments than to the laws of human governments in so far as these human bodies do not rise against the Word of God. The American people, strongly affected as it has been by the influence of Puritanism, instinctively revolts against the marvelous promises of the socialists, for they offer too little in return for the violation of the most fundamental property rights. This point we shall delineate more extensively in our last chapter.

In returning to Calvin, we observe that he goes exactly as far as Luther in his warning against avarice and the desire to amass temporal possessions. Doumergue, after having quoted some longer passages for which we have no room here, asks, "Can we trace the slightest trace of the capitalistic spirit in these words of Calvin? No, absolutely not." [27] "Calvin is Calvin," he comments, "and even the city of Geneva did not make Calvin and Calvinism."

Calvin in Geneva was very much the same sort of a person as Luther at Wittenberg. He constantly urged his followers to insist upon hard work, and he naturally opposed the mendicant monks. The number of holidays was restricted to Sundays and about half a dozen others. On the necessity of labor, concludes Doumergue, all the reformers agreed, though not on what kind of labor.[28]

Luther had praised agriculture as the ideal form of manual labor, as we saw. So did Calvin: "For agriculture in itself is a way of life, not only pure and innocent, but removed from all ambition, fraud and rapine. In short, among the ways of living, it is above all others, simple and sincere." [29] He recognized, exactly as did Luther, that "usually the merchants, through their astuteness and artifices, attract to themselves the greater part of the world's wealth." Nay, more than that, "they enrich themselves through their fraud and their illicit and evil trade." [30] On the contrary, ordinary laborers consider

[27] See Vol V, p. 651.

[28] See Vol. V, pp. 665-675.

[29] *Lessons on Jeremiah,* XXXV, 1-7. See *Opera,* XXXIX, *CR,* LXVII, col. 103: "Nam agricultura per se ratio vivendi est non modo pura et innoxia, sed etiam quae remota est ab ambitione, a fraudibus, a rapinis."

[30] Commentary on Zephania, I, 11. See *Opera,* XLIV, *CR,* LXXII, col. 19-20.

God their "master and doctor." [31] When Calvin saw how Isaiah denounced the rich city of Tyre, he added that Antwerp and Venice furnish two modern examples of hives of commerce and industry whose destruction would inflict great injury on many nations.[32] He did not thereby condemn commerce and industry in themselves, but indicated what were the dangers which lurked inside large centers of industrial life.

Calvin resembled Luther in his fulminations against the speculators, for they would "rather let the grain spoil in their bins than sell it to the people when they need it." Those who artificially caused prices to rise, in order to increase their profits, were naturally attacked severely by Calvin.[33] In his commentary on Amos VIII, 6, he said: "Here he still speaks of the avarice of the rich, who in time of scarcity held the poor subject to themselves and reduced them to slavery." [34]

In the winter of 1544-1545, Calvin appeared before the city council of Geneva, and urged the magistrates to find work for the unemployed. Living as he did in the midst of an urban population, he saw about him a large number of paupers who were willing to work, but could not find employment.[35] It is to be doubted that such unhappy conditions increased Calvin's respect for life in the cities. On the other hand, he could not help himself from showing continued interest in industrial employment which provided many members of his church with their only source of income.

Calvin made a brief statement to indicate that sometimes the debtor could not pay, and then he should not be forced to relinquish his property. This statement is used by Doumergue to show that Calvin definitely surpassed Luther in his attitude to the outworn medieval theories about usury. After quoting a part of the passage in which Calvin complained about the rich who sat still and made a great deal of money in the form of interest on loans, while others worked hard for their living, he says in a foot-note that Calvin is concerned about the question of the mortgage, the security offered

[31] Commentary on Isaiah, XXVIII, 26. See *Opera,* XXXVI, *CR,* LXIV, col. 482.

[32] Commentary on Isaiah XXIII, 2-12. See *Opera,* XXXVI, *CR,* LXIV, col. 387.

[33] Sermon CXIX, on Deuteronomy XX, 16-20. Printed in: *Opera,* XXVII, *CR,* LV, col. 639.

[34] Commentary on Amos VIII, 6, printed in *Opera,* XLIII, *CR,* LXXI, col. 145-146.

[35] E. Doumergue, *l.c.,* V, 670.

by the debtor in order to secure the loan. We have noted the passage above, and I doubt that there is anything in it to show that Calvin was not satisfied with the practice of giving security.[36] That Luther insisted on such security is admitted by Doumergue, or rather, he states correctly that Luther required it, and, without saying that Calvin did not require it, he tries very hard to give the reader that impression. Being a good Calvinist, he obviously does all he can for Calvin, and in most cases he is absolutely in the right. But in the question of one vital point, the superiority of Calvin in the matter of money lent on interest, Doumergue is wrong. He quotes less than one paragraph from all of Luther's works in this connection, and he is reluctant to cite some of the pertinent passages in Calvin's works.

Doumergue is also too anxious to show how much Calvin had to do with the decision by the city council of Geneva to permit the loaning of money to the poor. Here the Catholic historians have the advantage. As was the case in many European cities before the sixteenth century, Mountains of Piety, also called Loan Tables, were authorized in Geneva, which Doumergue admits. When in 1538 the city council considered whether or not the rate of interest should be limited to five per cent, Calvin probably had something to do with the action by the council, as Doumergue surmises. This is denied by several authorities, including Troeltsch.[37]

In 1547 the city council in Geneva made the following resolution: "That nobody may lend money on interest by charging more than five per cent, on pain of confiscation of the principal, and of making amends, the nature of which shall depend upon the circumstances involved." This resolution has been reproduced in the *Opera* of Calvin,[38] but that fact does not prove that Calvin was instrumental in enlarging the opportunities for lending and borrowing capital. It was partly his desire to lower the rates of interest which led to that action.[39]

[36] See Vol. V, p. 683, note 4.

[37] See E. de Girard, *Histore de l'économie sociale jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle* (1900), p. 222; E. Troeltsch, *l.c.*, Vol. II, p. 912.

[38] Under *Ordonnances sur la police des eglises della campagne.* See *Opera,* X, *BR,* XXXVIII, Part One, col. 56-57: "Que nul ne preste a usure ou a prouffit plus aut de scincq pour cent, sur poienne de confiscation du principal et destre condamne en amende arbitraire selon lexigence du cas."

[39] André-E. Sayous, "Calvinisme et capitalisme, l'expérience genevoise," in *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale,* Vol. VII (1935), p. 228.

In this connection Doumergue quotes a passage from J. Ashley, who remarked that Calvin's theory of interest was a turning point in the history of European thought.[40] But, as we have seen above, such a statement cannot possibly be made by anyone who has read and understood the treatises and letters in which Luther had led the way. Long before Calvin saw the city of Geneva for the first time, Luther had published his sermons on usury, his treatise on trade and usury, and his interesting letter to the magistrates of Danzig, in which he used obscure phrases, thus hiding, under queer terminology, a theory for which Calvin usually receives the whole credit. But let it be said for both reformers, that neither of them would have felt flattered in the least, had he been informed of the great honor which modern admirers wished to confer upon him.

If John Calvin could now be brought before a court of great authorities on economic history and theology, and if he were asked whether he considered himself closer to the spirit of modern capitalism than Martin Luther, he would answer without hesitation that he had followed in the footsteps of Luther, but had gone only part of the way. Had he not written much less on economic theories and practices than Luther, and had he not refused to answer embarrassing questions which had caused no difficulty for Luther? A keen French authority on the history of banking in Geneva has recently remarked with much justice that nobody ever was more "anti-Mammon" than John Calvin.[41] This scholar has shown that Calvin's followers in Geneva faithfully copied his attitude toward the spirit of capitalism, as we shall observe in the next chapter. It was as if Calvin's mind had remained with the devout disciples in Geneva.

Such, for example, was the case with Professor F. Turrettini, who taught theology at Geneva in the second half of the seventeenth century, and who composed an excellent commentary on usury. After pointing out that many of the Lutherans had strongly opposed the lending of money on interest, and that "among our own, Zwingli, Musculus and Aretius did the same," he made a careful distinction between loans made to the poor and those offered to the moderately wealthy. He argued, as Calvin had done, that money,

[40] *Introduction to English Economic History and Theory,* Part II, 8th ed. (London, 1914), pp. 458-460.

[41] See André-E. Sayous, *l.c.,* p. 232: "Nul ne fut plus antimammoniste que Calvin."

when not used, is indeed sterile, which is even true of a piece of land. But the managers of finance companies sucked the blood out of their poor victims, he continued. Near the close of his commentary, the professor came to the defence of Calvin, who had been attacked by a number of Catholic and Jansenist writers for having been "a patron of the usurers." He refers here to the famous writer Bayle, to Pascal, and to some of the Jesuits. Says Turrettini: "Calvin wrote so cautiously and soberly about usury that he did not hide the fact that he disliked to discuss it altogether. Moreover, he added reservations in making his attitude known in his Epistle 383." This is the epistle written in 1545 to De Sachins, as noted above.[42]

It is most unfortunate that even in our own time gross misunderstanding of Calvin's economic views still persists on a large scale. There appears, for example, in the magnificent work, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* the Second Series, the XIVth volume, a curious commentary on usury, in connection with the translation of the canon promulgated by the Church Council of Nicea dealing with usury: "The glory of inventing the new moral code on the subject, by which that which before was looked upon as mortal sin has been transfigured into innocence, if not virtue, belongs to John Calvin! He made the modern distinction between 'interest' and 'usury,' and was the first to write in defence of this then new-fangled refinement of casuistry. Luther violently opposed him, and Melanchthon also kept to the old doctrine, though less violently (as was to be expected); today the whole Christian West, Protestant and Catholic alike, stake their salvation upon the truth of Calvin's distinction!" [43]

Calvin, instead of having been the first to distinguish between interest and usury, showed so little desire to understand this difference, that, as we have just seen, he thought the word interest signifies something that is of interest to us. He knew so little about the history of money and of interest that not until 1555 did he voluntarily discuss usury, and as late as that year he apparently did not

[42] *Institutio theologiae elencticae authore Francisco Turrettino,* Vol. II (New York, 1847), pp. 109-113.

[43] The editor of this volume, which was published in 1900, H. R. Percival, was no doubt imbued with proper respect for the authority of the great Church Councils of the early Middle Ages. But there were plenty of books accessible to him at that time to show him how unfair his false verdict was to Calvin.

know that it was Aristotle who had invented the celebrated maxim, "Money does not beget money." Calvin's discussion of the word interest comes much later than that by Luther, and it must have sounded very naive to those jurists who knew that more than one hundred years before Calvin wrote on the subject, it had been analyzed by capable scholars.

Chapter IV

COMMUNISM AMONG THE CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the example set by the primitive Christian church, as described in Acts, IV, 34-37, appealed strongly to many devout Christians. Not only did the numerous monks and nuns surrender their personal property in their desire to imitate their Savior and His disciples, but the Waldensians, Beguins, and Lollards frequently pooled their possessions.

The Roman Catholic Church had long frowned upon the practice of sects or brotherhoods which seemed to compete with monasticism. Property held in common, so it argued, was very well for monks and nuns, but laymen should be content with their place in society. The organization called Brotherhood of the Common Life, which was founded about the year 1380,[1] at first encountered much opposition from the friars. Fortunately for the pious brethren, however, a young scholar in their midst advanced such cogent reasons to show how well the brotherhood obeyed all regulations established by the Church that during the course of the fifteenth century it received many privileges from the papal court.

The treatise in which the Brethren of the Common Life were so warmly and so successfully defended was entitled, *On the Mode of Life of those who hold their Property in Common.* The author was Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen (1367-1398). Two manuscript copies in the Prussian State Library in Berlin and the City Library of Nuremberg enabled me to edit this interesting work.[2]

[1] See A. Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance, A History of the "Devotio Moderna"* (New York, 1925), pp. 41-46.

[2] See A. Hyma, "Het traktaat 'Super modo vivendi devotorum hominum simul commorantium,' door Gerard Zerbolt van Zutphen," in *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht,* Vol. LII (1925), pp. 1-100. On the authorship of the treatise,

Gerard Zerbolt wrote that there were six ways of possessing property, some of which were far from commendable, but to live outside of monasteries and still to have no property of one's own was highly praiseworthy. Firstly, it would be in complete accordance with Christ's wish as expressed in Matthew XIX, 21: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast." Secondly, man's natural mind or reason impels him to lead the simple life, that is, the common life, though man has sinned against his natural mind or reason, with the result that now the common life appears more difficult than was originally the case. Thirdly, many saints and doctors recommend the cession of one's private property for the benefit of society or the family, such as Egidius, Thomas Aquinas and Bede. Where love reigns supreme, no one will want possessions of his own, and friendship is promoted by the common life, as has been so well said by Seneca. Fourthly, in the primitive church all goods had been in common, and was not the early church the best one? We are taught by nature that the common life is most suitable for us, for man is indeed a social animal, as Aristotle justly remarked. Hence the Stoics used to say that man was born to assist other men, which saying is supported by Genesis II. This is what Plato also asserted in the myth of Timaeus. Paul preached the same theory in Romans XII, and St. Ambrose did so in the first book of *De Officiis,* Ch. CXXVIII. St. Augustine also recommended the common life on several occasions.

Gabriel Biel, the well-known philosopher and theologian who exerted great influence upon Martin Luther, and who was for a time rector of the house of the Brethren of the Common Life at Butzbach, wrote a similar treatise on the common life. It is much briefer than that by Zerbolt, but having been produced by a man of eminence in the scholarly world, it merits serious study. Professor W. Landeen, one of my students, will shortly publish it in his doctoral dissertation on the Devotio Moderna in Germany.[3]

Being supported by the Church and owing to their fame as educators, copyists and printers, the Brethren attracted thousands of

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see A. Hyma, "Is Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen the Author of the Super Modo Vivendi?" in *Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis,* Vol. XVI (1922), pp. 107-128.

[3] The treatise is to be found in the Royal Library in the Hague, Ms. 75 G. 58, fol. 1r to 21r.

students either to their own schools, or to their dormitories, or to both. Among these students may be mentioned Thomas a Kempis, author of the *Imitation of Christ;* John Mombaer, author of the *Rosary of Spiritual Exercises;* Paracelsus, the famous medical expert; Erasmus, who was with them for at least eight years; and Luther, who attended their school in Magdeburg. John Standonck learned much from the brethren at Gouda, and he composed rules for the college of Montaigu at Paris, where Calvin spent four years during his student life in the Sorbonne. John Sturm was with the brethren at Liege, and he copied their methods in education so well that he became known as the founder of the German high school system. The Jesuit educators also learned much from the Brethren of the Common Life.[4]

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the semi-monastic organization built up by the Brethren of the Common Life found much favor with the leaders of either the Reformation or the Counter-Reformation. Erasmus admitted in 1517 that the Brethren were not nearly so bad as the monks, for "this body of men, who are motivated by an individual sense of virtue and a vestige of early religion, are not bound by irrevocable vows." But a few years later he said: "This class of teachers is now widely spread through the world, a destruction to good intellects and seminaries of monasticism." [5] Luther was more sympathetic toward them, and as late as 1532 he wrote to the rector of the brethren at Herford, "I dare not indulge in great wishes, but if all other things were in as good condition as the brethren-houses, the Church would be much too blessed even in this life." [6]

It would seem that the brotherhood would have continued to flourish in Germany and the Netherlands, if the storm called the Reformation had not swept most of the houses away. The two hostile camps, manned by the Lutherans and the Calvinists on the one hand, and by the Catholics on the other hand, wanted either the whole of monasticism or none of it. They were not interested in compromise. Luther, who had much to say about the blessed gospel of Christ, and who constantly warned against avarice, built up a

[4] A. Hyma, *The Christ. Ren.,* Chs. VII, VIII.
[5] See A. Hyma, *The Youth of Erasmus,* pp. 130, 128.
[6] See the correspondence of Luther, edited by E. L. Enders, Vol. IX, pp. 146-147.

small fortune for himself, which might indicate that he was not very reactionary.

However, Luther must have contemplated the pious brethren with considerable admiration, for in 1532 he addressed the magistrates of Herford in the following words: "Inasmuch as the brethren and sisters were the first to begin the Gospel among you, lead a creditable life, have a decent and well-behaved congregation, and at the same time faithfully teach and hold the pure word, may I affectionately entreat your worships not to permit any dispeace or molestation to befall them, on account of their wearing the religious dress, and observing old and laudable usages not contrary to the Gospel? For such monasteries and brethren-houses please me beyond measure. Would to God that all monastic institutions were like them! Clergymen, cities and countries would then be better served and more prosperous than they now are." These words are significant, for they reveal that Luther was slow to condemn monasticism completely, and that if a spirit of toleration had prevailed in Germany during the fifth and sixth decades of the sixteenth century, the Protestants in Germany would perhaps have retained institutions resembling that of the Brethren of the Common Life.

How different was Luther's attitude toward those leaders of the rebellious peasants in the dreadful Peasants' War of 1525! Both before and during this civil war, there had been much clamoring for a division of property. Calvin, as we saw, had warned against the impatience of the poor, and Luther also attacked the communistic spirit of the peasants who went about appropriating for themselves the goods of their lords. In 1525 he exclaimed: "Let no one take pity on the hardened, obstinate and blinded peasants who will not listen. . . . An ass must be beaten and the rabble governed by force." [7]

The Anabaptists, as is well known, were spread throughout western and southern Germany, and in their enthusiasm for the return to the primitive church, they constantly harped on the words contained in Acts IV, 34-37: "Neither was there anyone among them who lacked: for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold." The

[7] M. Luther, *Ein Sendbrief von dem harten Büchlein wider die Bauern,* in *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol. XVIII, pp. 384-401.

continued rise in prices irked the laboring classes, whose wages did not go up nearly so fast. They were not restrained by great leaders among them, as had been the case in Wittenberg, where radicalism was swiftly ended by Luther in 1522 upon his return from the Wartburg. High and low, nearly all the Anabaptists desired political, social and economic liberty for the multitude.

G. Schmoller, in his excellent article on the economic theories in Germany during the period of the Reformation, published as early as 1860, frequently uses the term *Kommunismus,* and has much to say about the communistic ideas of the Anabaptists.[8] He says that the Anabaptists "have correctly been compared with the socialists and communists of our time." Schmoller knew nothing then about the Russian communists, and it must be granted that the term "communism" today includes more than it did in Schmoller's time. But from an economic standpoint we may apply the word "communist" to the Anabaptists.[9]

The excesses committed by the Anabaptists in Münster were spectacular, but they constituted only an ephemeral episode in the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland. In the Netherlands on the other hand, the history of the Anabaptists from 1530 to 1566 is almost identical with the history of the Reformation.[10] The economic theories of the moderate Anabaptists are indeed of considerable importance.

Property held in common was advocated by Bernard Rothmann, chaplain of the cathedral in Münster, and it was stated in the creed of the Anabaptists in Münster that "no Christian may practise usury, nor make personal profit, but everything shall be in accordance with the example of the Apostles." [11] Rothmann could report with pride: "We have made our goods common property under the

[8] "Zur Geschichte der national-ökonomischen Ansichten in Deutschland während der Reformations-Periode," in *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft,* Vol. XVI (1860), pp. 698-706.

[9] See the same use of the term in the excellent studies by two German scholars in our century: G. Sodeur, *Der Kommunismus in der Kirchengeschichte,* 1920; H. von Schubert, "Der Kommunismus der Wiedertaüffer in Münster und seine Quellen," in *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften,* Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1919, 11. Abhandlung.

[10] L. Knappert, *Het ontstaan en de vestiging van het Protestantisme in de Nederlanden* (Utrecht, 1924), p. 181.

[11] H. von Schubert, *l.c.,* pp. 4-6.

supervision of the deacons. Among us everything has been removed that serves egoism and desire for temporal gain, buying and selling, labor for money, interest and usury, and exploitation of the labor of one's neighbor." [12] This statement, however, is a little strong, for the theory of property held in common was not generally enforced by the leaders in Münster.

The collapse of the notorious "kingdom of God" in Münster (1535), the persecutions of the Anabaptists in Switzerland and Germany, and the lack of leadership in those countries[13] would probably have ended with the extinction of the Anabaptist movement if a recrudescence in the northern Netherlands under Menno Simons (1496-1561) had not won the respect of the Dutch government under William the Silent (of Orange-Nassau). Menno Simons, the spiritual father of the Mennonites, and in some respects of the Baptists in England and the United States, was quick to detect the flaws in the older sects. In his learned treatise, *A Foundation and Plain Instruction of the Saving Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ,* he wrote: "Afterward the sect of Münster made inroads, by whom many pious hearts in our quarter were led into error. . . . I conferred twice with one of their leaders, once in private and again in public, but my admonitions availed nothing. . . . I faithfully warned everyone in relation to the abominations and crimes of Münster, concerning kings, polygamy, wealth, the sword, etc. Nine months later I renounced all my worldly honor . . . and I willingly submitted to poverty." [14]

East of the Netherlands, however, the communistic principles of Rothmann were supported by several important writers and a number of denominations, one of which, the Hutterian Brethren, has perpetuated Rothmann's form of communism until the present

[12] G. Schmoller, *l.c.,* p. 703; H. von Schubert, *l.c.,* pp. 8-10.

[13] See E. B. Bax, *Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists* (New York, 1903); J. Beck, *Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertaüfer* (Vienna, 1883); R. Heath, *Anabaptism* (London, 1895); L. Keller, *Geschichte der Widertaüfer* (Münster, 1880); R. Wolkan, *Geschichtsbücher der Hutterischen Brüder* (Vienna, 1923). Excellent source-material is to be found in Hermanni a Kerssenbroch, *Anabaptistici furoris Monasterium . . . eventis narratio,* ed. by H. Detmer (Münster, 1901). On Rothmann, see H. Detmer, *Bernhard Rothmann* (Münster, 1904). Several new pieces are reproduced in K. Löeffler, *Die Widertaüfer zu Münster 1534-1535, Berichte, Aussagen und Aktenstücke von Augenzeugen und Zeitgenossen* (Jena, 1923).

[14] See the English translation by I. D. Rupp (Lancaster, Pa., 1835), pp. 3, 5.

day.[15] Among the influential writers in Germany may be mentioned Sebastian Franck, who, according to Rothmann himself, provided the latter with his communistic ideas. In the *Chronicle and Description of the Turks,* dated 1530, and the *Bible History* of 1531, Franck pointed out that the Hebrews, the Greeks and the early Christians believed the common life to have been the natural and the perfect life. "And St. Augustine says: 'According to human, and not divine, law, one may say that this village is mine!' . . . We may therefore conclude that the idea of personal property is not from God, but it has been derived from the unfaithfulness of man, and originated by Nimrod the hunter, who forcibly took all the property that previously had been held in common. Consequently, property owned in common is a feature of Christian life, as we say, 'the communion of saints.' " [16]

It is not surprising that Martin Luther, the man who first saw the light of day in one of the better homes in Eisleben, whose father was superintendent of rich mines, who was accompanied to the Diet of Worms in 1521 by three thousand soldiers under the knight von Sickingen, and who was known at the Wartburg castle as a nobleman, should have frowned upon all communistic experiments. Luther owned a large and beautifully furnished home in Wittenberg, and his wife, who came from a noble family, assisted him in acquiring land and cattle. Hence we hear Luther speak of the patriarch Abraham, who had been blessed with the possession of cattle, gold and silver. How could anyone presume to say, then, that one should seek to further his salvation by despising money and property? Even Christ had owned property, for did He not have a purse full of money, which Judas carried? And as for the property held in common by the Apostles, it does not follow that such a practice is necessary. St. Peter said to Annanias, "You were the owner of the property, and after it was sold, the money was still yours." Is it not clear, then, that each person was permitted to do with his property as he saw fit? "Nobody was commanded to sell his possessions and to give the proceeds to the Church. Such community of goods would never work in our age, seeing how many wicked

[15] J. Horsch, *The Hutterian Brethren, 1528-1931. A Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty* (Goshen, Ind., 1931), pp. 4, 5, 8.

[16] Seb. Franck, *Geschichtsbibel,* fol. 6 recto, 10 verso, 239 verso, and 240 verso.

people abound everywhere. That is also the reason why the practice broke down in Jerusalem." [17]

Luther brings up here an interesting point when he says that according to the Anabaptists, nobody may be considered a Christian who owns any private property.[18] He refers to Romans XV, 4, where the reader is informed that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." Consequently, so argues Luther, Abraham was our example. He also tells at length about the "simple-minded Francis," who taught that money should not be owned by his followers. One must make a distinction, so says Luther, between the thing possessed and the person who possesses it. Sin or crime resides not in the goods but in the owner of the same. "The Gospel teaches us about most things how we may come to know what sin is, and how we may hope through the merit of Christ for the remission of sins. This the good father does not see, and he thinks that the Gospel has established a new law, that of selling one's goods and giving them to the poor. . . . If the account is correct, Francis begged for bread and other necessities, and then distributed them among the poor. . . . Pope John XXIII [19] condemned the Franciscans, although he was not of the same faith as we are."

It is curious that the misunderstanding of which Luther accused both the Anabaptists and the Franciscans should have been perpetuated among some scholars in Europe even today. For example, Mr. R. Pascal, a research fellow at Cambridge, published in 1933 this extraordinary statement about Luther: "His true attitude to these ideals of his can be seen in his behaviour towards the men who really wished to reform society on Christian principles. He turned with abhorrence from the idea of the communisation of property, and called the peasants and their leaders who pressed for this reform godless. And he did this not simply because he condemned the use of force, but because he believed in the sacredness of private prop-

[17] M. Luther, *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol. XLII, pp. 493-499. It is the first part of the lecture on Genesis XIII.

[18] See *Werke,* XLII, 494: "Anabaptistae quoque iudicant Christianos non esse, qui aliquid proprium habent."

[19] This should be John XXII, who in a bull of the year 1323 declared that teaching heretical according to which Christ and His early disciples had held all their property in common.

erty. . . . Thus he abandoned Christian principle, and accepted the basis of capitalistic society." [20]

On the first page of the present work I indicated that not only the capitalists and the socialists thought that they had found the justification of their principles in the teachings of Jesus and the practices of the Apostolic Church. Now we note here that even some of the communists of today go to the same source, and they also seek to place the label of Christianity upon their economic views. If Luther, by following the interpretation of practically all Christian writers who had preceded him, abandoned Christian principles, we might well ask ourselves who the Christians were before Luther's time. We should ask furthermore if there is not a vital difference between the belief in private property only and what is termed capitalism.

In this connection it will not be superfluous to point out the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Even the Dominican friar Thomas Aquinas clearly perceived the distinction between the ownership of private property pure and simple, and full-fledged capitalism. In his *Summa contra gentiles* he discussed at length the question of communism versus privately owned property. While admitting that for a short time communism was practised in the Apostolic Church at Jerusalem, he added that such a form of life was very difficult to maintain, because it would require a large amount of wealth with which to support so many indigent persons as there are in the world generally, and because the common fund is subject to loss, either through fraud or mismanagement. Furthermore, it is frequently necessary for a certain number of persons to move from one place to another. How are they to be provided for from the common fund, when they are not any longer among the original company of communists? Aquinas also raises objections to the mode of life in the regular monasteries, because here the abundance of temporal possessions resulted in many worldly cares and anxieties. "Collectively owned property usually causes division", so he argued. On the other hand, he realized fully the advantages which monasticism offered to those who were peculiarly fitted for a life of contemplation and the writing of religious treatises. The profits acquired by some of the other brothers through their manual

[20] *The Social Basis of the German Reformation,* p. 193.

labor would enable the men with the gift of writing to procure food, clothing and shelter.[21]

In a chapter devoted to the solution of the objections raised against a life of poverty, Aquinas has something to say in favor of property held in common outside of monasteries: "It will suffice, but not for a long time. Thus the Apostles introduced this mode of life among the faithful of Jerusalem, because they, moved by the Holy Spirit, foresaw that they would not live long in that city, partly because of the persecutions that were to follow and partly because the destruction of Jerusalem was near at hand. Consequently, it was not necessary to provide for the poor except for a short period; and it is for that reason that we do not see the Apostles, as they move among the Gentiles, continue to support that mode of life." [22]

We might conclude from these words of the angelic doctor that the Christian Church, after the dispersion of the early followers of Jesus of Nazareth from Jerusalem between 30 and 70 A.D., did not favor the community of goods among laymen. It simply did not work, for how were married people to share all their property with other members of the Church? How were large congregations able to divide all property among the members of the church, and how could the Church as a whole supervise such an impractical arrangement? That it was tried repeatedly, I do not doubt in the least. Monasticism itself is a witness of these attempts. The Beguines in the Netherlands are another testimony.[23] And the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life furnish the most important example of the attempt among laymen. But in these cases we meet with unmarried men and women living separately in comparative seclusion. This was very different from the mode of life introduced in Münster by the Anabaptists.

Martin Luther was very slow in condemning monasticism, and even more reluctant in disapproving of the exemplary lives lived by the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life. The ultimate aim of their lives was the worship of God and the increase in religious fervor. Luther realized that perfectly, so he was consistent in the way

[21] Book III, Chs. 130-134.

[22] Book III, Ch. 135.

[23] See for example, J. Greven, *Die Anfänge der Beginen* (Münster in W., 1912), pp. 31-35, 40-110.

he tried to protect them as late as 1532. He believed with the Catholics that virtue does not depend upon the amount of external wealth that one possesses but upon the manner in which one regards this wealth.[24] Private property was a necessity for most people in this world.

Melanchthon likewise defended the idea of personal property. Being of a more legalistic mind than Luther, he argued more from the standpoint of law and equity. In a treatise entitled, *On the Law of Property-ownership,* he reasoned that in accordance with a divine law property could be bought and sold. How else could kings and princes rule in their respective countries? They had to have money in their treasuries.[25] All the principal arguments adduced by the communistic leaders of the Anabaptists were carefully analyzed by Melanchthon in a learned treatise on one of Cicero's works. Beginning with the words of God in the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," which must have presupposed the validity of personal property, the author examines next the statement made by Cicero, quoted, among others, by Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen, "Among friends all things are held in common." Melanchthon says that such liberality in extending one's hospitality to friends is a matter of virtue, and not of obligation or civil law. The quotation from Acts IV, 32-35, is taken up next. Divine law, says the author, sanctions private property. The example of the Apostles does not make for universal law. Ananias was killed for his deceitful words, and not for having refused to give up his property. Again, the text in II Cor. VIII, 14, 15, "Let there be equality," must be interpreted to mean that each person voluntarily administers to the poor, in proportion to his ability. The most difficult text is Matthew XIX, 21: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me." This saying was intended for a certain youth as a special vocation, to give up his worldly possessions and follow Jesus. It is not a universal command directed to everybody.

In referring to another text, Matthew V, 42, "Give to him that asketh thee," Melanchthon speaks of the "fanatical absurdity of the

[24] This idea was perfectly expressed by Aquinas in these words: Hinc etiam considerandum est quod medium virtutis non accipitur secundum quantitatem exteriorum quae in usum veniunt, sed secundum regulam rationis." See his *Summa contra gentiles,* Book III, Ch. 134.

[25] *De jure possidendi,* in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. XI, col. 636.

Anabaptists who some time ago disturbed the Church, asserting that it was necessary to hold all goods in common." Divine law certainly permits the holding of private property, and trade. And when Cicero argued that nothing shall be considered private property, his statement is false in so far as it is applied to private property, as it is inherited and sold and transferred.[26]

Melanchthon actually goes so far as to aver that private property is the basis upon which the whole of human society rests: "God wills that we shall be bound together through such ties, and shall serve each other therewith. . . . This will require no long disputation, for what is natural law is not to be broken. I have said that the ownership of property is in accordance with natural law, for all laws and the natural reason indicate that personal property is necessary in this life." [27]

Calvin argues in like manner against the communistic spirit of certain sects of his time. He has in mind especially the Brethren of the Free Spirit, whom he calls the Spiritual Libertines. In explaining Matthew XIX, 21, he says, "The solution is simple, for our Savior does not establish a general rule suitable for everybody, but applies his advice to a certain person, the young man to whom he was talking. His malady was attachment to his property, which was absorbing his attention because of its great proportions. He had not realized before that such absorption was a sin. . . . It is pure folly to deduce from this statement, which applies to the heart of one particular person, a universal doctrine." [28]

And what does Calvin do with the text in Acts IV, 32? He remarks that the writer of this account did not have a communistic society in mind. On the contrary, it was a group of friends who were so much attached to each other that they did not wish to see anyone in the group suffer want. "One might allege that such persons do not have any private property. But that is not true at all, for they continued to maintain their own domestic establishments, enjoyed their own property, retained the management of their goods, without the whole of their joint possessions being pooled together. . . .

[26] Ph. Melanchthon, *Prologomena in Officia Ciceronis,* in *CR,* Vol. XVI, col. 549-558.

[27] *Loci communes,* in *CR,* Vol. XXII, col. 293-296.

[28] J. Calvin, *Contre la secte phantastique et furieuse des Libertins, qui se nomment spirituelz,* in *CR,* Vol. VII, col. 217-218.

St. Luke did not say that they sold all of their property, did he?" [29]

The Dutch Anabaptists were nearly as much opposed to the communistic spirit of the followers of Rothmann in Münster as were Luther, Melanchthon and Calvin. Even Melchior Hoffmann, who spent several years in the Netherlands, and the prophet John Matthys, who joined the German Anabaptists in Münster, showed no marked predilection for the idea of property to be held in common.[30] We shall now turn once more to the sagacious leader of the Dutch Anabaptists, Menno Simons, who introduced among them a more conservative creed than that to which they had been accustomed before the year 1535.

How well Simons understood the pernicious nature of the doctrines previously taught by the Anabaptists in Westphalia has been ably demonstrated by an American scholar who made his research a labor of love. "I do not doubt," said Simons about the earlier sects in his native Friesland, "that our dear brethren who have formerly transgressed somewhat against the Lord in so far as they would protect their faith with weapons, have a gracious God. For they were, I hope, not polluted with the aforesaid heresies, and sought nothing but Jesus Christ and eternal life. For this cause they forsook all their possessions, their own kindred, yea their own lives." [31]

Did the followers of Simons perhaps surrender their private property, seeing that their brethren had been ready to "forsake all their possessions"? The leader himself merely permitted his disciples to follow the general rule of Christian charity, and on one occasion he remarked that he had taught the doctrine of personal property in "such manner that not one of the devout nor one of their children ever had to go begging." A martyr who had practised the faith Simons preached, testified that "those who support our creed help one another, and let no one suffer want." [32]

Although the provincial government of the former county of Holland wrote in 1535 to Mary of Hungary, regent for Charles V,

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[29] J. Calvin, *l.c.*, col. 217-218.

[30] H. von Schubert, *l.c.*, p. 10. But Matthys changed his mind when he arrived in Münster, according to L. Knappert, *l.c.*, p. 201.

[31] J. Horsch, "Menno Simons' Attitude toward the Anabaptists of Muenster," in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* Vol. X (1936), p .57.

[32] K. Vos, *Menno Simons, 1496-1561. Zijn leven en werken en zijne reformatorische denkbeelden* (Leiden, 1914), p. 202.

that "all the poor in these parts, owing to increased unemployment, are clamoring for a division of property among all the people, which would render the countryside desolate," very little in the nature of a social revolution followed. A Dutch authority correctly observed some years ago that the Anabaptist-chiliastic movement, with its emphasis on the corruption prevailing in the world and the proximity of the coming millennium, was indeed caused partly by the bad economic conditions prevailing in Germany and the Netherlands between 1530 and 1534, but that nevertheless it was certainly not a reaction of the lower classes against capitalism. Not one of the Dutch Anabaptists who had been imprisoned for their faith ever spoke in the vein of what we would now call radical socialism.[33]

The Dutch Anabaptists during the second half of the sixteenth century dropped the name "Mennonites" and called themselves Baptists, but they continued to support the general confession of faith established under the guidance of Menno Simons. For them the Old Testament had ceased to be of great importance, for they reasoned that "all doctrines of both the Old Testament and the New Testament are to be construed in the light of the meaning given to them by Christ and His Apostles." They said with St. Paul that no other foundation may be laid than that which has been laid, namely, Jesus Christ. Whatever Jesus had commanded had the final authority in every domain of human endeavor. Menno Simons insisted that one should constantly have in mind the example set by the Apostles and the primitive church. He emphasized the need of "conforming to the spirit of the word of Christ, the doctrines and lives of the Apostles, and the piety, love, activities, misery, cross and suffering of the early church." From the letters of his followers we learn that "the practice of owning property in common broke down for a good reason, and has not continued among us." [34]

Menno Simons prohibited, or rather, he tried to prohibit the use of gold and silver, and he effectively warred against all manner of idle display of fineries. But among the martyrs who died for the Anabaptist faith in Antwerp we find Henry Beverts of Deventer, a silversmith; Assuerus of Gheemont, a silversmith; Jack Schot, a

[33] L. Knappert, *l.c.*, p. 200.
[34] K. Vos, *l.c.*, p. 293.

goldsmith; Adam Henry of Deventer, a goldsmith; and Hans of Ozybrugge in Westphalia, a silversmith. These were burned at the stake or drowned in the years 1551-1562. One of the Anabaptist ministers who received the sentence of perpetual imprisonment, was Assuerus the goldsmith. Warner van Lennep, the goldsmith who lived in the Rokin at Amsterdam in 1634, was a Baptist in good standing. All of this merely shows that the early disciples of Simons were not concerned much about the question of whether material wealth was harmful in itself or not. After all, there seems to be but one passage in the works of Simons where he insists on the danger of superfluous wealth: "I desire that they will relinquish their pagan pomp and splendor, in houses, clothes, gold, silver, etc." [35]

When in the closing decades of the sixteenth and the first three decades of the seventeenth century, the English Protestants arrived in the Netherlands to seek religious toleration, many of them joined the churches among the "Waterlanders," that is, the Baptists in the northern provinces. They were so named because the country was little else than a mixture of lowland and water. Here the English exiles received hospitality and assistance, and here in a sense the Baptist Church of England and America was born. It was most fortunate that the excesses of the earlier periods had been followed by a spirit of moderation and true religious zeal, which recognized the validity of established political institutions, the need of trained pastors, the value of discipline, and the practical advantage of sound instruction for children.

William Elliot Griffis has justly expressed the great debt which the Anglo-Saxon world owes to those despised people, who bore the guilt of crimes which they themselves had not committed: "So the day will come when, from underneath the mass of malignity, ignorance, misrepresentation and caricature, the followers of leaders like Hubmaier, Robert Browne, Menno Simons, William the Silent, Roger Williams and William Penn will win the world's honor." [36]

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[35] K. Vos, *l.c.*, p. 204.

[36] See his preface in J. de Hoop Scheffer, *History of the Free Churchmen called the Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists in the Dutch Republic 1581-1701* (Ithica, N.Y., 1922), p. XV.

Chapter V

SIXTEENTH CENTURY PROTESTANTISM AND THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

During the past fifty years it has been the almost universal belief among the leading authorities on economic, social and religious history that the canonical prohibition of lending money on interest, supported by the opinions of the Church Fathers, and fortified by the authority of Thomas Aquinas, restricted the flow of capital during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Luther with his "peasant" mind, as even Sombart thought, made little or no progress in freeing capital from the shackles of ecclesiastical hostility.[1] But Calvin, the Bourgeois, helped to make the Dutch Republic and the English commonwealth the two first successful capitalistic powers.[2]

In this connection we must consider first the remarkable view of Sombart, who holds that the scholastic philosophers proved their friendship for capitalism by refusing to oppose the canonical teaching about usury: "Capitalism appealed to them. It was on that account that they clung to the teaching of the Canon Law concerning usury. For what did the prohibition of usury mean to the Catholic moralists of the 15th and 16th centuries? Expressed in modern terms it denoted: Don't prevent money from becoming capital." [3] Sombart wonders why "no one has noticed this before." He believed that "possibly one reason is that the specialists who have hitherto

[1] W. Sombart, *The Quintessence of Capitalism,* which is the English translation of *Der Bourgeois* (New York, 1915), p. 251: "In Lutheranism this tendency was strengthened by Luther's own devotion to the economic conditions that prevailed in the Middle Ages with the self-supporting peasant and craftsman. That is why Luther's philosophy is far behind that of the Schoolmen."

[2] This is not the view of Sombart, however, for he says, "But other forms of Protestantism, and Calvinism in particular, were no different in this respect." See the same work, p. 252.

[3] The same work, p. 247.

devoted themselves to scholastic philosophy were not economists and lacked that knowledge of affairs which Bernard of Siena and Antonine of Florence possessed."

It would seem to the present writer, however, that both Max Weber and Werner Sombart, who in this respect have presented theories which are exactly the opposite of each other, were lacking in a proper understanding of the religious factors involved in the rise of capitalism. That two scholastic writers of the fifteenth century who were declared saints by the Church, should have favored capitalism through their support of the Canon Law, is indeed a preposterous assertion. On the other hand, the canonical prohibition just mentioned probably did less harm to the attempted expansion of commerce and industry than is commonly believed. If this conclusion of mine is correct, it follows that the defiance of the prohibition by the Calvinists did not materially assist the growth of modern capitalism.

Nevertheless, we shall open this chapter with a discussion of theories relating to the lending of money on interest, in order to determine whether there is really any truth at all in the vaunted thesis of Weber and Troeltsch. The first two Protestant writers whose opinions rivaled those of Thomas Aquinas, and of both Luther and Calvin, were Philip Melanchthon and Martin Bucer. Their views have been neglected by recent commentators, although it has often been claimed that Calvin and his immediate followers were strongly affected by them.

Melanchthon, unlike Luther and Calvin, was the typical scholar, a man of thought, not of action. It was not for him to found a church or to play an active part in the affairs of men. Being closely associated with German humanism, his mind ran more into legal channels, as we observed in an earlier chapter. Consequently, in discussing the question of usury, he did not confine himself to biblical passages and quotations from the Church Fathers, but referred frequently to civil law and the law of nature. It will not surprise the reader to learn that Melanchthon did not become vitally interested in the problem of lending money on interest until about the year 1538.

However, in the *Commentaries on Some of the Political Works of Aristotle,* first published in 1530, Melanchthon discussed usury in

a separate section, in which respect he preceded Calvin by fifteen years. And more than that, he took up the problem on his own volition, whereas Calvin first analyzed it in reply to a letter from one of his friends. Besides, as early as 1530 he ascribed the famous passage about sterile money to Aristotle, and quoted him from the original Greek. Having been brought up as a good humanist, he knew Greek thoroughly, and treated Aristotle with proper respect (though some humanists in their superficial railings professed to despise the Philosopher). On the other hand, he was evangelical, which was not necessarily a trait of the average humanist. He placed the words of the Gospel far above those of all the Greek philosophers put together.

Melanchthon argued as follows: "Aristotle condemns usury, and he says that it is against nature, for money was invented to become a medium of exchange in the buying and selling of merchandise, rather than to beget money. In usury, money begets money. Usury is the amount of money which is added to the principal loaned by the creditor to the debtor." Then he quotes the famous passage from Aristotle, saying that it has been mentioned many times by scholars in the past. These scholars, he adds, have utilized the passage, in order to show that usury is contrary to nature. "In goods which are being used by people, it is impossible to separate the article from its use. When one practises usury, he sells the use of a product, separated from the thing itself. This is therefore against nature. Again, things which are not rendered fruitful by nature ought not to be exchanged as things which do render fruit. We note that under the form of usury money is exchanged, which is not made fruitful by nature.

"In recent times it has been disputed whether or not a Christian should lend money on interest. It is our opinion that a Christian is permitted to make use of contracts approved by law as honest, just as he is permitted to do other things of a political nature. Although old imperial laws allow usury, they nevertheless do not approve of it, nor do they judge it to be honest. For the laws do not recommend all things which they permit. The laws cannot eliminate all evils from public life any more than the physicians can heal all the diseases of the human body. . . . The Christian, therefore, is not to practise usury. But let him use contracts which have been approved

by the magistrate. Many tragedies have lately accompanied various contracts. It would seem to us that one should not attempt to judge the nature of a contract, but let the magisrate do this for him, as we let the physician decide which medicines are to be given for allaying the fever and which for pleurisy. He who teaches the Gospel must exhort people to subscribe religiously to public laws. . . . It is sufficient that common sense be used in public affairs, so that no inhuman laws be followed. . . . To adhere to the judgment of the magistrate in civil affairs is the safe thing to do, as long as they do not deviate too far from nature." [4]

In 1545 Melanchthon appears to have composed a treatise entitled, *Dissertation on Contracts,* which was published for the first time in 1545. He also prepared an edition of a similar treatise in the form of a chapter, or a number of sections, in a work entitled, *Element of Ethics,* which was first published in 1550. Besides, a shorter treatise under the same name appeared for the first time in the first edition of the *Epitome of Moral Philosophy* (1538). We shall examine these three separate treatises, in order to determine how Melanchthon's mind changed during the years 1538-1545.[5]

In the treatise of 1538 Melanchthon writes thus: "Usury is the profit which is added to the principal when money is lent. When this profit is added because the creditor was deprived of a chance of making a profit elsewhere with the money, or causes a financial loss to himself through the loan, it is not usury. But real usury is prohibited, and it is against nature, as is explained by the scholars on these three grounds: (1) It is unjust, because the creditor demands money for nothing, since the principal is not subject to risk. (2) A thing which of its own nature does not bear fruit, is not to be offered as something that does bear fruit. This could be done with a piece of land which produces crops, and from which one can take something if one rents it, even though the land is not lost in that way. (3) Money is not to be confused with goods, and interest must not be added to the principal when money is treated as a product which people use. The usurers make all the more profit, because their debtors are exactly the kind of persons who will agree to take money

[4] Ph. Melanchthon, *Commentarii in librum II. Politicorum Aristotelis,* the section called, *De usura.* See *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. XVI (Halle, 1850), col. 428-430.

[5] See respectively, *CR,* Vol. XVI, col. 495-508, 248-261, and 128-146.

on any terms, being so much in need of cash at the moment. It is for this reason that Aristotle concluded that money lent on interest is against nature.

"Consequently, when usury is against nature, the lawmakers of old and the Christian doctrine prohibit it (see Psalm XV, 5; and Luke VI, 34). Let us therefore follow the pious rule, that to lend money on interest is illicit. . . . But buying and selling on contract is permissible. One may either buy a piece of land, or a debt on the land, or a debt on movable goods. Inasmuch as these debts encumber property and not the person of the owner, they can be sold. . . . Gerson and others have prudently judged that not all contracts are to be condemned forthwith as usury. But the nature of the contracts should be inspected, and in formulating a judgment, learning and humanity are to constitute the final criterion. Since God has instituted political authorities, the Christian must abide by their decisions."

Thus far the author has in mind all contracts in which money is not lent on interest as a simple loan. Melanchthon reasons very nearly in the same manner as did Luther. In case the creditor lends money without taking a risk, and in case he lends it without security, the loan is condemned as usury. But as long as one can talk about buying and selling, there has not yet been usury. This corresponds to the *Zinskauf* which we discussed in Chapter II. Now we shall see what Melanchthon had to say about *interest.*

"Interest is the debt which a person owes another for having caused him damages through his loss of the opportunity of making a profit. For example, if somebody owes me twenty florins by the first of May, and he does not pay me on time, I will not be able to make proper use of my money. Hence I am entitled to some reparation. Merchants in particular will suffer considerable loss when they do not receive funds due them. . . . It is impossible to tell just how much compensation the debtor should pay, but in no case will the creditor be entitled to anything if he has not suffered loss because of not having been able to make use of his funds."

In the *Dissertation on Contracts,* dated 1545, the author adds little that is new. First of all he insists on equality of opportunity between debtor and creditor. He quotes again from the Bible those passages which condemn the lending of money on interest. He

refers to the practice among the Greeks and Romans called the *centesima,* or the one-hundredth part. And he then turns to the taxes levied in antiquity, the tenth part, the twentieth part, and so forth. What follows is practically a repetition of the discussion analyzed above. Furthermore, his treatment of the problem in the later work, the *Elements of Ethics* (1550), differs so little from the others that a separate analysis is superfluous. It may be noted that the definition of the word *interest,* though not in exactly the same form, appears also in the commentary on Cicero's *De Officiis,*[6] which was first published in 1530.

Now the question arises, Was Melanchthon really so "far ahead of his contemporaries" as is often surmised?[7] Did he seem so anxious to break with Aristotle and the Canon Law? He certainly does not say so himself in any of the passages where he discusses the lending of money on interest, for which he is often praised as an advanced thinker. Not only is he more vague and obscure than Luther, but he is farther removed from actual practice. It would not be difficult to prove that the Roman Catholic clergy in Melanchthon's time were more in favor of what he still called *usury* than he was, for they openly practised what he deemed an evil. Their connections with the banking house of the Fuggers in Rome and Augsburg gave a decided impetus to the rapid spread of so-called usury. It is all very well to say that the Catholic church has always been opposed to capitalism, but theory and practice have not coincided with each other in certain critical periods, which is particularly true of the very age in which modern capitalism was born.[8]

Another Protestant writer who was closely associated with Luther's career in Germany, and whose views on capitalism will

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[6] Ph. Melanchthon, *Prolegomena in Officia Ciceronis,* in *CR,* Vol. XVI, col. 578-579.

[7] Such is the verdict, for example, of G. Schmoller in his excellent article which has been mentioned several times above: "Aber gerade damit steht Melanchthon doch hoch über den allgemeinen Ansichten seiner Zeit." See p. 577 of the article.

[8] A. Fanfani, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism* (New York, 1936), p. 119: "The Catholic ideal of economic life finds condensed expression in the principles of the Gospels, which were elaborated successively by St. Paul, the Fathers, and the doctors till, in the age of the *Summae* and of Scholasticism, St. Thomas Aquinas, prince of Catholic philosophers, grafted Catholic principles on to the old, all but forgotten, trunk of Aristotelianism." This is very true, but the reader must bear in mind what the papal curia did at the close of the Middle Ages, if he is to determine what was the role played respectively by Catholicism and Protestantism in the development of modern capitalism.

prove nearly as reactionary as those of Melanchthon, was Martin Butzer (French spelling is Bucer). This scholar is known to have exerted great influence upon Calvin's theological development,[9] and one writer has suggested that Calvin derived his views on usury from Butzer, but he has been refuted successfully by E. Doumergue.[10]

Butzer simply taught that not all forms of usury ought to be condemned, which had been done by the "foolish scholastics." Certainly, he reasoned in 1527, the lending of money to others on interest is laudatory, in case both parties derive from it a fair and just profit. In 1539 he suggested that the interest charged by the Jews should not exceed the rate of five per cent. Finally, in 1550 he wrote a treatise of considerable interest, entitled *On Usury,* in which he expressed views which were almost identical with those of Calvin. There can be no doubt that when he was professor of theology at Cambridge in the reign of Edward VI, he must have sowed there the seeds of opposition to the old régime. But we shall see presently that about this time the English government passed a regulation requiring that all interest on loans was to be illegal. Butzer's influence was great in the field of religion, but his support of the lending of money on interest cannot have weighed heavily with the English. It certainly is remarkable that Professor H. Eells, the author of the most satisfactory biography of Butzer, does not refer to this problem at all, nor does he mention in his bibliography the work of the German scholar who sought to prove that Calvin owed his view on capitalism to Butzer.

Although Huldreich Zwingli preceded Calvin and Melanchthon in a chronological sense, he is mentioned here last, because his opinions on capital and interest are confused and naive. Zwingli claimed that every form of interest should be condemned, for one should give alms outright to those who needed money. He made scarcely any distinction between the problem of private property and

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[9] A. Lang, *Johannes Calvin* (Leipzig, 1909), pp. 77-88; G. Anrich, *Martin Bucer* (Strassburg, 1914), pp. 143-145; H. Eells, *Matin Bucer* (New Haven, Conn., 1931), pp. 231-237.

[10] See G. Klingenburg, *Das Verhältnis Calvins zu Butzer, Untersucht auf Grund der wirtschaft-ethischen Bedeutung beider Reformatoren* (Bonn, 1912), pp. 95-96; E. Doumergue, *l.c.,* Vol. V, pp. 688-689.

that of lending money on interest.[11] But he presented this interesting observation: "If a person owns a piece of land worth one hundred florins, and borrows fifty florins on it, he owes the creditor one-half of the crops raised on it that year; and if he borrows twenty-five florins, he will owe the creditor one-fourth of the crops. This is the way in which the jurists are to understand the word *interest.* In this manner the taking of interest would not become such a hardship to people, although before God they remain still under condemnation, as said before. Furthermore, the general will of the public is expressed in the letters and seals of the government, so that each debtor shall pay interest on the capital which he has borrowed on his property, for otherwise he would disturb the peace. And I am saying this only of the rate of five per cent, which has been established in accordance with human justice. This would be my advice; let everyone who has lent money on interest have the property evaluated which was given as security, and then let him take a part of the proceeds from the use of the said property. For else I shall be much concerned about the burdens which such people place upon themselves.[12]

Zwingli condemns rates above five per cent and all lending of money on interest where no security is offered. He advises that henceforth no new loans be made on property, for there will be enough old ones left for those wealthy unbelievers who feel they must keep up the old practice. The poor must adjust themselves to their lot. Far better for him to sell his home and land than to sell himself. "For what else does he do when he borrows money on his property than to sell his own labor to some one else; he will work, and what he gains with his labor, he will donate to the other person." [13]

Are we to conclude with G. Schmoller, the founder of a school of distinguished authorities in Germany on economics, that Zwingli was more advanced than was Luther, since he was not only a theologian but also a practical citizen of his native town, the great

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[11] H. Zwingli, *Von göttlicher und menschlicher Gerechtigkeit,* in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. LXXXIX, pp. 515-520.

[12] H. Zwingli, *l.c.,* pp. 516-517.

[13] H. Zwingli, *Wer Ursache gebe zu Aufruhr,* in *CR,* Vol. XC, pp. 451-452.

metropolis of German Switzerland, Zurich? [14] Are we certain that Zwingli, much more than Luther, sought to justify actual conditions, which permitted the lending of money on interest at five per cent? Zwingli said that the unbelievers might continue to follow the regulations established by the local magistrates. He was not concerned with what they chose to do. But Christians ought to live different lives. In short, Christians could not be capitalists. This is what the Church Fathers had taught; this is what the great doctor angelicus, Thomas Aquinas, had recommended; this is what the Canon Law had prescribed. For was not this the precept of the Founder of the Church? And had not the first missionaries of the Christian faith preached the same gospel? What else could the first Protestants have done with these theories except to follow in the footsteps of the disciples and the apostles? So this is what they did: they exhorted their followers to beware of the temptations which accompanied the acquisition of wealth. They could not serve two masters, God and Mammon.

I cannot help getting the impression that many of the experts in the field of the social sciences have directed far too much attention to the influence exerted by environment upon the genesis of each person's mind. Just because Zwingli was located in a large city, it is to be assumed that he would of necessity reflect the atmosphere he breathed there, exactly as was the case with Calvin, who had spent four years in Paris as a student, and who afterward lived in other important centers of commerce and industry. Let us then look a little more closely into the views of Zwingli on the taking of interest, in order to determine whether he was more advanced than was Luther. We shall note some statements which apparently have been overlooked thus far.

In his explanation of the last article in his famous 67 Articles of Faith of 1523, he said that it was not his intention to advise anyone not to pay the interest on loans, inasmuch as the civil authorities permitted the practice of usury.[15] And in his treatise, *On Divine and Human Justice,* also composed in 1523, Zwingli admitted that in

[14] See Schmoller's article, pp. 572-573: "Dem Prinzip nach steht er auf gleichem Boden mit Luther; aber er ist nicht bloss Geistlicher wie jener, er ist zugleich der praktische Bürger und Politiker seiner Vaterstadt, und sucht sich als solcher mit der Wirklichkeit zu versöhnen und wenigstens den bestehenden Gesetzen gerecht zu werden."

[15] H. Zwingli, *Der siben und sechzigest artickel,* in *CR,* Vol. LXXXIX, p. 454.

case people do not wish to follow the Mosaic law nor the injunctions of the Gospel (Exodus XXII, 25; Lev. XXV, 36; Luke XII, 33), "the government is available, and tells us to give and to take interest." [16]

Furthermore, in the important work on the causes of rebellion, Zwingli remarks that "the interest charge of five per cent should not have been permitted to remain upon the earth. . . . Now the interest charges have encumbered every piece of land in such manner that whoever does not find a way in which to pay them, will lose his land to his creditor." [17] Each year, so continues the author, the debts keep piling up, and presently even the new owner of the property will also be driven off to make room for his creditor. "For these interest charges devour just as does real usury. If you were true to God, as was Moses, and God's own Son, Jesus Christ, you would not suffer such misery to remain." On the other hand, those who do not pay the interest, are thieves and enemies of the Gospel.[18]

Zwingli's most extensive discussion of usury fills only four pages, and it seems to me that Gustav Schmoller, who was one of the very few scholars in Europe to make use of the passage, quoted only that section which appeared to support his theory of Zwingli's more advanced standpoint as compared with that adopted by Luther three years earlier. Zwingli is discussing the comparison between divine and human justice. His treatment of interest on loans opens with this statement: "One is obliged to pay interest, in accordance with God's commandment, 'Render therefore to all their dues,' see Romans XIII, 7. For as soon as private property is introduced, the civil authorities may compel no one to lend anything without expecting any profit on the loan. . . . Thus Christ calls wealth unjust and unrighteous, see Luke XVI, 'Make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.' For without doubt the land and the fruits of the land belong to God, see Psalm XXIV, 1. He lets us use it without payment. But we make that our own which belongs to God.

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[16] *CR,* Vol. LXXXIX, p. 489.

[17] *CR,* Vol. XC, pp. 436-437: "Die zins, die von zwentzigsten eins nemmend, die soltend ir uff das erdrych nie haben lassen leggen, wenn ir trüwe vätter wärind gewesen. . . . Nun habend ye die zins alle böden also besetzt, das, wo man nitt wäg findt dieselbigen widerum ze entschütten, das üwere lüt nit üwer, sonder der wucherer werdend sin."

[18] *CR,* Vol. XC, p. 387. See also the editor's comment on p. 356.

However, God permits us to continue to be thus His debtors for using His property. And since this debt always remains unpaid, we are to make use of it in accordance with His word and spirit. Consequently, if one does not use it thus after the will of God, he stands before God as unjust, even though he be considered just before the human law. It is for this reason that Christ calls riches unjust and unrighteous, partly because we make that our own which is God's property, and partly because we do not use that which is God's in accordance with His will. Therefore, all interest charges are ungodly.

"In the first place, because all riches are unrighteous: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' But let no one lose courage, for God's grace is greater than our misdeeds. We must, however, acknowledge that wealth belongs to God; and we must use this wealth to His honor, and we must think of it as if we did not own it ourselves. Otherwise I cannot understand how a rich man can be a believer, if he has set his heart on his riches. . . . As a result, he cannot attain salvation.

"In the second place, because God has admonished not to lend money on interest, Luke VI, Exodus XXII. Since then the people who have taken over God's property and made it their own, refuse to give some of it to the needy for their use, without expecting to make a profit on it, so it has come about that the poor human justice has allowed that the lender gives the property to the borrower on condition that the latter pay interest in the form of a part of the products of the land. Is the land worth one hundred guilders, and the borrower takes a loan of fifty guilders, the payment is one-half of the crops raised on the land. . . . This is how the jurists, who wish to protect and defend the taking of interest, are to understand the problem. . . . But that a person should have to pay for the use of a house, or field, or vineyard, that which the jurists call usufruct, that is far too much.

"I am surprised that those who were present at the Council of Constance and the Council of Basel had the stupidity, even when measured by human justice, to pass so unjust a regulaton that unbelieving princes would not have had the heart to inflict it upon

their subjects.[19] Why did they not pay any attention to the word of Christ, Luke VI, 35, 'And lend, hoping for nothing again?' How dare those false papists talk of such transactions which the princes would have been afraid to authorize? But since they have not been satisfied with the tithes, but permitted themselves to lend money on interest among themselves, it shows me that they have originated this harmful practice of lending money on interest.

"Behold, where are now those lying chatterers? Yes, indeed, the Church Councils are called together in the Holy Spirit. Does the Holy Spirit authorize that which is against the will of God? But in case general custom supports the lending of money on interest, every person is obliged to pay the interest, especially if the custom is confirmed by the seals and letters of the civil authorities, and if one has accepted the loan with that understanding in mind. And I say this only of those practices which have been instituted by human ordinances of justice (which were obviously authorized by those who showed no regard for God's word nor for the law of nature), that is, the rate of five per cent. One would sin against God in refusing to pay this rate of interest.

"But the government should endeavor seriously to prevent the evil of interest charges on loans. And I would advise that, as St. Paul did in I Cor. VII, 12, 'But to the rest speak I, not the Lord,' we follow the injunction as to be found in Luke VI, 35, 'And lend, hoping for nothing again.' But here I see that we are not to think that we can be perfect, and so I suggest that each person who borrows money, have his property evaluated. . . . I am very much afraid that because of the weakness and evil of men's hearts, this practice of lending on interest will lead to serious difficulties and harm. Consequently, and now not I, but the Word of God, must be permitted to speak, 'Let no one take too much care as to how he shall make his living.' God feeds the ravens, and other birds that do not sow nor reap, and He clothes the flowers of the field. How much more are we not worth than they in the sight of the Lord? Certainly, He will also give us and our children food. These great misdeeds are the result of unbelief, and of lack of trust in God, who wishes to enlighten us,

[19] See J. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* original, 31 volumes (Florence, 1759-1798); reprint and continuation, 53 volumes (Paris, Leipzig, 1901-), Vol. XXVII, col. 1164; 1178, 1185; Vol. XXIX, col. 104, 454.

so that we will recognize Him and love Him above all worldly things. Amen." [20]

After having given first those scattered passages which were noted by Schmoller and his followers, I have presented the discourse of Zwingli as it is found in his treatise, *On Divine and Human Justice.* It seems to me that Zwingli recognized how far the Catholic clergy had wandered from the biblical injunctions against the lending of money on interest. Protestant criticism in the sixteenth century was directed against the Catholic clergy, wherever the latter had, in the eyes of the reformers, deviated from the path prescribed by Christ and His disciples and apostles. Whereas some modernistic interpreters with practically no knowledge of either church history or theology weave fantastic theories about the relation between Protestantism and capitalism, it behooves the conscientious historian to return to the original sources of early Protestantism. Here he will find that the Protestants, far from encouraging what is called the "capitalistic spirit," put innumerable stumbling blocks in its way. Instead of looking upon Zwingli as more advanced than Luther in his attitude toward usury, it would be more nearly correct to conclude that Luther was more advanced than Zwingli. Moreover, it would be equally correct to surmise that early Protestantism was less advanced than was Catholicism, either modern or medieval.

There is no sense in the way the majority of the Catholics and the orthodox Protestants seek to overemphasize the alleged differences in their respective attitudes toward the political, economic and social problems which have always confronted mankind. Those contributions to the spirit of modern capitalism which were supposedly made by orthodox Protestantism, the rejection of the canonical prohibition on the lending of money on interest, the duty of working hard, the desire to save, the hallowing of one's vocation, the friendly attitude displayed to the expansion of commerce and industry, and the justification of private property beyond one's personal needs—all these, as the great Italian authority, A. Fanfani, has aptly demonstrated, were present in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when modern capitalism was born. But not all

[20] H. Zwingli, *Von göttlicher und menschlicher Gerechtigkeit,* in *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. LXXXIX, pp. 515-518.

of these are symptoms of Catholicism. Only the following factors were and still are the proper symptoms, namely, the duty of working hard, as a form of penance and not as a means of making money; the desire to live frugally, and to save, in order to give alms to the poor or do anything else to better social conditions generally; the hallowing of one's vocation; and the belief that a Christian may acquire more of the world's goods than he needs for his own family.[21]

Much misunderstanding has been caused by the erroneous belief that shortly after Calvin's death in Geneva, his followers under Beza set up a bank of exchange. This fact was to have proved how "advanced" the early Calvinists were. However, what actually happened was this: They wanted to found and did found one of those "Mountains of Piety," which had been instituted in numerous places by authorities in the Catholic church in order to check the work of the Jews and the "Lombards" as money-lenders. When the council of the city tried to establish a real bank in 1568, since they had some money to invest in what they considered a proper and profitable enterprise, the pastors and elders of the Reformed churches in the town made such loud complaints that the council desisted from this premature attempt. Not until the end of the seventeenth century, after Calvinism had been diluted with the waters of modern capitalism, did the religious fervor of the Calvinists cool sufficiently to enable the civil authorities to overcome the old hostility to the lending of money on interest.[22]

That Luther, Zwingli, Butzer, Melanchthon and hundreds of other orthodox Protestants recognized what had been going on in the world about them, and that they recalled what Peter had said about the duty of the Christians to obey civil authorities, is not surprising. The Catholics likewise had made the same observations, for they did not differ in this respect from the Protestants. If Calvin had been so favorably inclined toward the lending of money on interest, and if he had had no scruples (which we know he exhibited in great number) about this form of "usury," it cannot be explained easily

[21] A. Fanfani, *Cattolicesimo e Protestantesimo nella formazione storica del capitalismo* (Milan, 1934), pp. 100-110. See also the English translation, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism* (New York, 1936), pp. 144-159.

[22] André-E. Sayous, "Calvinisme et capitalisme, l'experience genevoise, "in *Annales d'histoire économique,* Vol. VII (1935), p. 229.

why the French, English and Dutch followers of his were so severe in their condemnation of what they considered usury.[23] As late as the year 1646, the outstanding Calvinist professors of theology in the Dutch Republic stated in a printed treatise that no interest ought to be charged on any loans granted to the poor, and less than two or three per cent on moderately large loans. The decisions of the French, German and Dutch Calvinist churches from 1559 to 1656 show that those members of the church who charged interest on loans to the poor, or who charged high rates of anybody, were not permitted to participate in the sacrament of Communion. And when, shortly after the demise of King Henry VIII, Calvinist members of the English nobility gained control of the government under young Edward VI, they repealed the act of Henry VIII which had permitted the lending of money on interest at the rate of ten per cent.[24] The men who were responsible for such steps were sincerely of the opinion that they conformed faithfully to the wishes of Calvin and Luther. Could it be said of them that they did not know what Calvin's views on the subject were? That would be very strange indeed, since they scrupulously adhered to the political and religious and ecclesiastical doctrines of the churches at Geneva. It seems much more likely that certain modern writers, who were not industrious enough to read what Calvin, Luther and the leading Catholic scholars from 1400 to 1600 had said themselves, concocted what was thought a brilliant theory, and bent their energy toward the task of proving this theory.

A letter addressed in 1543 by the church in Geneva to that in Lausanne, and signed by Calvin and four others, expresses the earliest views of Calvin's church on usury known to us: "The services of the notary [clerk] who usually draws up legal papers for us, could not be procured today, partly because Antonius arrived first, in order that he would be safe from harm at his hands; and partly because, immediately after the testimony for Antonius, he went to his vineyard. This person is wealthy, yet he rented his home on a contract, and according to its terms the tenant, a peasant, pays

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[23] On this subject see my forthcoming article, "Calvinism and Capitalism in the Netherlands, 1555-1700," in *The Journal of Modern History.*

[24] K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte,* Vol. I (Tübingen, 1927), p. 506. See also Vol. III (1928), pp. 388-403. And see our Ch. VII.

on each hundred florins six measures of wheat each year. He stated that he had agreed to these terms for fear that he would have to pay still more." The passage just quoted has the superscription, *De Usuris,* or, *On Usury.* The editor, who published it in 1897, states that the payment made by the peasant amounted to more than ten per cent.[25]

We meet here an idea expressed many times by Luther, and also discussed in a crude manner by Zwingli, as we just saw, which implied that interest charged on loans and rents levied on real estate are to be treated as being in one category. The proper rate in all cases was five per cent of the value of the property rented, or of the principal of the loan, the latter being sometimes in the form of goods, not money. The rate of five per cent happened to be considered fair by the general public before Calvin was born, and both Calvin and Luther, as well as Zwingli and Butzer, merely accepted the popular opinion, together with the authority of the local governments. Zwingli was exceptionally conservative when he declared that a person who owned a piece of land worth one hundred florins and borrowed one-half of that amount, should pay interest in the form of one-half of the crops produced with his own labor. That would ordinarily be an exceptionally high rate of interest, and for that reason it would seem that Luther was more reasonable in always setting a limit to the rate of interest.

As for the question of how much wealth a Protestant in the sixteenth century was permitted to possess, the leaders of the respective churches could perfectly agree with a Catholic preacher who lived in the fourteenth century and said: "Misers drown themselves in their money, but holy men put it under their feet and tread upon it and master it. . . . Many saints were very wealthy, and they climbed upon this tower, upon this mountain, thus coming nearer to God. The more they possessed, the higher they reached and the nearer they approached to heaven. They were grateful to God for it, and they loved Him the more for it." [26] This was also the view of Thomas

[25] A. Herminjard, *Correspondance des Réformateurs dans les pays de langue française,* Vol. IX (Geneva and Paris, 1897), p. 57.

[26] See A. Fanfani, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism,* p. 125. The preacher was the Blessed Giordano of Rivalto, who made the above statement in 1304, when Italy was in the midst of enormous economic activity and gave birth to what is called modern capitalism.

Aquinas and practically all the later scholastics. It has been reaffirmed in recent times by the Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI.

If the orthodox Protestants differed from the Catholics in this respect, they were more anticapitalistic than were the Catholics. When all the extreme views on both sides are thrown together with all the moderate views into a great mixing machine, we shall find the average view of the orthodox Protestants and the Catholics respectively to be almost identical. By quoting from ten or twenty writers and preachers will not help us a great deal, for individual opinions varied considerably, and theory and practice did not always coincide. It is to be hoped that in the near future a large amount of pertinent opinions will be collected and properly analyzed by competent critics. In the meantime it is possible to draw some general conclusions about the relation between orthodox Protestantism and capitalism which will not be altered afterward by any quantity of quotations from the writings of individual Protestants. At present we have already available the official confessions of faith, the records of the synods or assemblies of clergymen, the pronouncements of theological faculties, and the words of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Melanchthon and Butzer, besides the writings of numerous Puritans which have been searched by R. H. Tawney and others. Finally, the biographies of a large number of eminent continental Protestants of the sixteenth century help to complete a picture which I admit remains fragmentary in parts but will nevertheless enable us to make a fairly comprehensive comparison between the attitude displayed respectively by the Roman Catholics and the leading Protestants of the sixteenth century toward the rising tide of capitalism.

In the first place, it will no longer do to deny that capitalism and the spirit of capitalism were expanding rapidly before there were any Protestants. A reference to the works of A. Doren and A. Fanfani and W. Sombart, mentioned above, will suffice here.

In the second place, the more is said about the problem of usury in the sixteenth century, the more certain it appears that Protestantism either was more conservative than Catholicism or else it merely accepted as proper what the civil governments had enacted. This point has been fully demonstrated by now.

In the third place, the duty of the Christian to labor as hard and as

well as he can was recognized by the great Church Fathers and the medieval doctors. Luther and Calvin read with approbation what St. Augustine had said about the subject. It is a matter of common knowledge that early Protestantism drew heavily upon this Father. Unfortunately, many Protestants in recent times have made the erroneous conclusion that modern Catholicism is farther removed from Augustinianism than is early Protestantism. Even medieval Catholicism rested firmly upon the views held by the learned bishop, as may be gathered most convincingly by looking through the tables of contents of the Latin manuscripts preserved today in the European and American libraries. Such an examination will reveal that Augustine rather than Gregory the Great was the most influential among the Church Fathers.[27]

The duty to work is strongly emphasized by Augustine, who argues that it ennobles man. He regards with admiration the various handicrafts and the products of manual labor: industrial establishments, agriculture, the building of cities, architecture, inventions, as well as poetry, music and mathematics. "All of this is grand and fully deserved by mankind." Although he felt that mental and spiritual work was higher than physical, he added that "those who want to be spiritual only and not labor with the body, reveal their indolence." He was rather afraid of commerce, realizing that though it was fully permitted, it carried with it the dangers which antiquity had always dreaded. And the lending of money on interest he naturally abhorred.[28]

Following two centuries of neglect by some of the leaders in the Church, the study of Augustine reached greater heights than ever in the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century. This renewed interest in the leading Church Father was shared by Catholics and Protestants alike, with the result that his theory of

[27] Professor C. Stephenson is mistaken when he says that "among the four Doctors of Latin Christianity he was beyond question the most popular." That Gregory was not the most popular can easily be proved in the manner indicated above. See the textbook, *Mediaeval History* (New York, 1935), p. 167, and compare the small space devoted to the works of Augustine with that reserved for the writings of Gregory, on pp. 100-104 and 166-170. Stephenson reflects here the current Protestant outlook, which is also seen in the book by W. F. van Gunsteren, *Kalvinismus und Kapitalismus* (Amsterdam, 1934), where in the text Augustine is not mentioned a single time, although 75 pages are devoted to the medieval Church and its thinkers.

[28] Ir. E. H. M. Beekman, *Katholicisme Calvinisme Gapitalisme,* pp. 47-48.

predestination as slightly modified by Luther and Calvin, was adopted by many great thinkers in the Roman Catholic Church. For nearly a quarter of a century (*ca.* 1585-1610) a tremendous controversy raged in the ranks of the clergy, both in Spain and in Rome itself, but after eighty-five sessions the problem of predestination was left unsettled.[29]

We may conclude, therefore, that during the sixteenth century both Protestants and Catholics gladly sought justification for their beliefs and actions in the writings of Augustine. Moreover, we may bring up the fourth point in our comparison between Protestantism and Catholicism where they were in accord, namely, the need to save and to build up a surplus for the support of the poor and for the glory of God. Much has been made of this point by Weber and Troeltsch as far as the early Protestants were concerned, and there is no need of repeating what is well known about the Calvinists in particular. That the Catholics both before and after 1500 were no different has been debated. But it would be hard to find any Protestants who spent so little for their own needs as did the Franciscans and the Dominicans. They, much more than the Protestants, took to heart the saying of Jesus, "If you will be perfect, sell what you have and give the proceeds to the poor, and you will possess a treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." The imitation of Christ was nowhere more nearly accomplished than among the friars of the thirteenth century, and it is to be doubted that the spirit of their founders ever left them completely. Today it is very powerfull still.

The new social and economic theories supposedly introduced first by the Protestants have been examined with considerable care by the Catholic scholar Beekman, who has been mentioned above, and from whom I now wish to quote the following pregnant words: "Weber cites not a single Catholic source from the original, and believes that he can study Catholicism among its enemies. . . . Troeltsch quotes from scarcely any Catholic theologians, but interprets constantly in the way it is done by Ritschl, Harnack, Seeberg, and others. . . . It is incomprehensible how a scholar like Harnack, who has presented such excellent critical material concerning early Christian literature, loses his scientific attitude as soon

[29] J. de Jong, *Handboek der kerkgeschiedenis,* Vol. III (Utrecht, 1937), pp. 251-256.

as he begins to compare Protestantism with Catholicism. It is certainly simpler to view the contrast between the two as that between the ideal monasticism, the fleeing from the world, and the life of the Christian in the world. Or, that the germ of Protestantism lies in the faith which has been aroused by the preaching of the Word, and that of Catholicism in mysticism, sacrament and priesthood.

"But what good does such reasoning as long as it is false? I hope to show that from the Catholic standpoint the obtaining of eternal salvation (and that ought to be considered the end of the Christian life) requires neither mysticism nor sacrament nor priestly services, but only faith, that is, the saving faith. And this is not merely a modern conception among Catholics, but rather the official teaching of the medieval theologians, and particularly of the Council of Trent. In our day, when Europe hastens to its doom, it is more necessary than ever before that all who believe in Christ attempt to understand each other better." [30]

Let us then suggest to the Catholic writers that they will speak with greater sympathy about the views of Luther and Calvin than they have done generally before. The economic theories of these two reformers have been rather fully presented above from the original sources, in order that both liberal Protestants and Catholics will cease distorting them.

We now turn to our fifth point, the problem about the vocation of the Christian in this world. Several Protestant authorities have gone to strange extremes in their belief that the Catholic ideal of the vocation is identical with monasticism. Weber, Tawney and many others have argued that in the early Church this was not yet the case, and that Protestants, in their return to the primitive church, brought the vocation back to the place it has held in the minds of the orthodox Protestants ever since. How erroneous this viewpoint has been may be seen in the chapter on the *Beruf,* the German word for vocation, of a book by H. M. Robertson, entitled, *The Rise of Economic Individualism* (Cambridge, 1933). Robertson has devoted much attention to this question. He has shown that not until the eighteenth century did the typical Puritans exhibit the attitude

[30] Beekman, *l.c.,* pp. 77-78.

toward their individual vocations which might be considered favorable to the development of capitalism.[31]

Mr. Robertson brings up a viewpoint with which I am in hearty sympathy. He claims that the thesis of Weber should be reversed, for then it can be proved to be correct. In his opinion capitalism altered Protestantism, and not the reverse. Gradually the spirit of capitalism, which is hostile to the fundamental essence of Catholicism and of orthodox Protestantism, affected the Dutch, and afterward the English, in such measure that many of them ceased to be interested in spiritual values. It would hardly be fair to Calvinism to call them Calvinists, or even Neo-Calvinists, as Troeltsch does, for they had become so deeply engrossed in the quest after material riches that they ignored the injunctions of their spiritual fathers.[32]

A. Fanfani adds much weight to the contention of Robertson when he points out that the "idea of vocation, attributed by Weber to the Protestants, was a living idea before the Reformation, and remained alive in the Catholic camp ever after." He adds that Bourdaloue, Houdry, Feugère, Griffet, Massillon and others have repeatedly reminded the faithful Catholics of modern France that in accordance with God's will each person has his place in the social order, and that he must perform his daily tasks with religious zeal, as if they were a part of his religion.[33]

Since it would require too much space to present quotations from an adequate number of minor Protestants of the sixteenth century, and since even those would add very little to the conclusions just reached, it must suffice to give a few excerpts from some of the most important confessions of faith. As a rule these sources contain little information about economic theories, but they reveal the attitude of the leading theologians and clergymen toward communism, the right to hold private property, the duty to work, the doctrine of predestination, the dangers inherent in temporal wealth, and the spiritual value of saving and almsgiving.

Of the fifty-eight Reformed or Calvinist confessions of faith published by E. F. K. Müller, only one contains a separate or extensive account of usury and interest. It is given there as the

[31] See pp. 8-28 of his book.
[32] H. M. Robertson, *l.c.*, p. 32.
[33] A. Fanfani, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism*, p. 204.

Confession of Erlauthal (Vallis Agrina), or Debreczin, in Hungary, dated 1562.[34] Apparently it is the longest Protestant confession of faith dating from the sixteenth century, and that is the reason why it is the only one to give a comprehensive treatment of usury and interest. "Properly speaking," it reads, "usury is called by the Scriptures the impious money (filthy lucre) and exaction which is added to the principal in a loan. It results in detriment and harm to both parties. About this usury speak Psalm XV, Deut. XXIII and Matthew VII. This usury, which robs one's neighbor, is prohibited, because it is unjust. And it reduces the poor to still greater want. Accept interest from no one. Do not accept interest from a needy brother, but help him instead. . . . Usury which is permissible we call those contracts and pacts in which money is lent for a certain period in order to fructify money (to add profit to the principal). If some one gives you one thousand gold florins, which you agree to use for a stated period, and with which you earn a profit and share this profit with your creditor, that is not usury." [35] This is again the same idea as expressed forty years earlier by Luther and Zwingli. Coming from the pens of Calvinists, it reads no differently from the pronouncements of Melanchthon, notwithstanding the opinions of modern experts who are simply bent on maintaining at all costs the wornout thesis of Weber and Troeltsch.

Little can be found in the confessions about vocation (*Beruf*), but in the so-called *Confessio tetrapolitana* of 1530, the confession of the four imperial cities of Strassburg, Constanz, Memmingen and Landau, the sixth section, or chapter, deals with "What a Christian must do." Here the word *beruff* is actually mentioned, and here we read these words: "It is the duty of the Christian in everything he does to further the welfare of his neighbor, especially his eternal welfare. . . . He must work for God with industry. . . . That which is most befitting to his name and vocation is to render obedience to the government." [36] In the Confession drawn up in 1532 by the Swiss synod of Bern the word *beruff* is mentioned also, and the Christian is urged not to do what the Anabaptists did, but to abide in

[34] *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche. In authentischen Texten mit geschichtlicher Einleitung* (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 265-376.
[35] E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften,* pp. 361-362.
[36] Müller, *l.c.,* p. 60.

his vocation and to maintain his private property. [37] It is evident that if the Weber-Troeltsch thesis is correct in insisting upon the new value given by the Protestants to one's vocation, their confessions should have given some proof of it.

Perhaps the famous Confession of Augsburg, dated 1530, which was prepared jointly by Luther and Melanchthon, discussed the matter more fully than was done by the Reformed confessions, for we are assured that Luther was the first to endow the vocation with a halo of sanctity. Article XX of the first part is indeed entitled, Of Good Works, but neither in this nor in any other article, is there any attention paid to the problem. All we have is this, "For their writings extant upon the Ten Commandments, and others of the like argument, do bear witness that they have to good purpose taught concerning every kind of life, and its duties; what kinds of life, and what works in every calling, do please God." [38]

About the duty to work hard and to save for the benefit of the needy we receive a little more information in the confessions of the Reformed churches. The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 is an extensive and carefully prepared document, and it is examined first to see what the Calvinist churches of Germany and the Dutch Republic believed, for they have always used and taught it. In the answer to Question 111, which discusses the Eighth Commandment, the Christian is told that he must work and save: "That I further my neighbor's good where I can and may deal with him as I would have others deal with me, and labor faithfully that I may be able to help the poor in need." [39] This sentence has often been quoted to prove that the Calvinists distinguished themselves from both Catholics and Lutherans in favoring capitalism through their incessant labor and their exceptional thrift. But is not such a sentence merely an expression of Christian piety? Moreover, so little was said and done about almsgiving when compared with what held true of the contemporary Catholics that on this point no references are required here.

[37] Müller, *l.c.*, p. 52.

[38] The above translation is from Ph. Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III (New York, 1877), p. 20. The original Latin version contains these words: "Quae genera vitae, quae opera in qualibet vocatione Deo placeant."

[39] Ph. Schaff, *l.c.*, III, 348. See also Müller, *l.c.*, p. 714. The latter reproduces the original German text.

There remain for examination those vital doctrines on which the Protestants differed widely. Perhaps the most important of these is predestination, as has been suggested in an earlier chapter. The Dutch Calvinists and the English Puritans were distinguished for their special brand of "inhumanity," as we saw. The knowledge or hope of having been elected by God out of a vast multitude for eternal salvation is supposed to have impelled these faithful followers of Calvin to perform almost superhuman efforts in the business world. But nowhere is there any definite proof available to sustain this theory. In the confessions of faith no connection is seen between predestination and the excessive desire for pecuniary profit so characteristic of English and Dutch business men in the seventeenth century.

The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England indicate that the views of the High Church party were not essentially different from those of the most radical Puritans. In Article XVII we read: "Predestination to lyfe, is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were layd) he hath constantly decreed by his councell secrete to us, to deliver from curse and damnation, those whom he hath chosen in Christe out of mankynd, and to bring them by Christe to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour." On free will the Anglican creed expresses itself thus: "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is suche, that he can not turne and prepare hym selfe by his owne naturall strength and good workes, to fayth and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good workes pleasaunt and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christe preventyng us, that we may have a good wyll, and workyng with us, when we have that good wyll." [40]

As for the Calvinist doctrine of the sovereignty of God, there can be no doubt that this doctrine emphasizes God's greatness as compared with man's insignificance to the fullest possible extent. In the Scotch confession of 1560 this doctrine is well represented: "By whom we confess and believe all things in heaven and earth to have been created, to be retained in their being, and to be ruled and guided by his inscrutable Providence, to such end as his eternal wisdom, goodness and justice has appointed them, to the manifesta-

[40] Ph. Schaff, *l.c.*, pp. 497, 493-494.

tion of his own glory." [41] In the French confession of 1559 the sovereignty of God is depicted thus: "We believe that he not only created all things, but that he governs and directs them, disposing and ordaining by his sovereign will all that happens in the world; not that he is the author of evil, or that the guilt of it can be imputed to him, as his will is the sovereign and infallible rule of all right and justice." [42]

The Belgic confession of 1561, as modified by the international Calvinist synod held at Dordrecht in the year 1618-19, devotes its thirteenth article to divine providence, where we read these words: "We believe that the same God, after he had created all things, did not forsake them, or give them up to fortune or chance, but that he rules and governs them, according to his holy will, so that nothing happens in this world without his appointment; nevertheless, God neither is the author of, nor can be charged with, the sins which are committed. For his power and goodness are so great an incomprehensible that he orders and executes his work in the most excellent and just manner even when the devil and wicked men act unjustly. And as to what he does surpassing human understanding, we will not curiously inquire into it further than our capacity will admit of; but with the greatest humility and reverence adore the righteous judgments of God which are hid from us, contenting ourselves that we are disciples of Christ, to learn only those things which he has revealed to us in his Word without transgressing these limits. . . . And therefore we reject that damnable error of the Epicureans, who say that God regards nothing, but leaves everything to chance." [43]

Just how such teachings could have assisted the rise of modern capitalism more than similar pronouncements by the Lutherans and the Catholics, is difficult to understand. For did not the early Calvinist insist with the Lutherans that faith was more important than works? And had not Luther argued at first that the Epistle of James was made out of straw? Luther had said this because James seemed to call for a kind of faith which differed fundamentally from that described by Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. James argued that "faith without works is dead." Would it not appear strange if the

[41] Müller, *l.c.*, p. 250.
[42] Schaff, *l.c.*, p. 365.
[43] Schaff, *l.c.*, pp. 397-398.

Protestants should have been more anxious than the Catholics to perform "good works?"

Another curious error indulged in by various European and American writers is the discussion of the alleged Calvinist doctrine about the relation between financial success and eternal salvation. According to the early Calvinists, so we are told, capitalistic efforts were transformed into religious efforts, "which were the sole way in which man could burn a grain of incense to the terrible Lord of Heaven and of earth." [44] It must give Catholic and liberal Protestant scholars a feeling of great satisfaction to pass such a verdict upon the Calvinists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They have even constructed a bridge leading from Calvin to Carnegie and Rockefeller, disregarding the fact that a twentieth century Baptist like John D. Rockefeller entertained views deviating fundamentally from Calvin's basic principles.

For example, it matters little what Henri Hauser says about Rockefeller and Carnegie. He and Fanfani, and a host of others can easily conclude that "thus Protestantism appeared as the religious sanction of the free efforts of man to attain wealth." They will make bold and go a bit farther still by saying, "The capitalist spirit was justified and no opposition could be made to the action of those natural circumstances that urged man to arm himself to defend his economic interests to the last ditch." [45] Again I would ask this question, Where do these writers find proof for supporting their idle fancies? Have they studied the confessions of faith, the records of the synods, and the commentaries on the Bible which were produced in the sixteenth century by the Calvinists? If so, will they be kind enough to quote from them?

Let us see what the Belgic confession of 1561 had to say about this terrible Lord of Heaven and Earth: "This doctrine [of predestination] affords us unspeakable consolation, since we are taught thereby that nothing can befall us by chance, but by the direction of our most gracious and heavenly Father, who watches over us with a paternal care, keeping all creatures so under his power that not a hair of our head (for they are all numbered), nor a sparrow, can fall to the ground, without the will of our Father, in whom we do en-

[44] A. Fanfani, *Cath., Prot. and Cap.*, p. 208.
[45] Fanfani, *l.c.*, p. 209.

tirely trust; being persuaded that he so restrains the devil and all our enemies that, without his will and permission, they cannot hurt us."[46] All the other Calvinist confessions of the sixteenth century speak of God in the same manner.

Were the Dutch, English, Scotch and German Calvinists perhaps more liberal than their spiritual father in Geneva? For Weber and his disciples have always argued that "the Father in heaven, so kind and merciful," is not present in the Calvinist theology. The Geneva Catechism, drawn up in Latin in the year 1545, should enable us to present a satisfactory answer to that question. It opens with these words: "What is the end of human life? That they might know God, who created them. Why do you say that? Because He placed us upon this earth, in order that He would be glorified in us. What then is the greatest good of man? It is He. How can the greatest good be had in Him? Because, if He should be withdrawn, our condition would be more unhappy than that of any brute. . . . How are we to honor Him? By placing our whole trust in Him, by reverencing Him with our whole life, by endeavoring to follow His will, by seeking our salvation in Him, by acknowledging Him as the author of all good things."

Then follows an analysis of the Apostle's Creed, near the end of which we read these remarks by Calvin, the author of the catechism: "It follows that faith is the root out of which spring all good works. . . . All doctrines of the Gospel are contained in these two things: Faith and penitence. What is penitence? Penitence is the abhorrence of sin, the love of justice, arising out of the fear of God, which lead us to the abnegation of our nature, and the mortification of the flesh, in order that we may let ourselves be ruled by the Holy Spirit, and direct all our energies and actions to the obedience of God's will."[47]

We see here plainly a reflection of Luther's continual emphasis upon justification by faith. The early Protestants said more about faith than about love, and it is exactly for that reason that they were so afraid of attaching too much imporance to what were called "good works." Love seeks expression in actions, but faith, as conceived by Luther and Calvin, is the only hope of one's personal sal-

[46] Schaff, *l.c.*, p. 397.
[47] Müller, *l.c.*, pp. 117, 128.

vation. It is the means of acquiring the gift of deliverance from sin and eternal death. It seeks no assurance in working for money, in building up a surplus for God's children, in founding hospitals. Faith is a spiritual gift.

John Calvin was speaking in the same vein as did Gerard Groote in the fourteenth century, when he urged his disciples to seek spiritual communion with a spiritual God. "For God is the *summum bonum;* if we have Him, we have all goodness; if we lose Him, nothing but evil is left unto us. And why? Because that part of us which is divine cannot exist without the life-giving contact with Him who alone can sustain life and nourish our inner selves." Groote's remarks about hard work and saving are also worth noting. As the founder of the brotherhood of the Common Life, whose methods of education were copied in the College of Montaigu, where Calvin spent four years, and whose immortal work, the *Imitation of Christ,* was well known to Calvin, Groote exerted considerable influence upon some of the great thinkers of the sixteenth century.

Groote said: "It is well for a true Christian to cede his possessions to the poor. This will compel him to work for his daily bread. . . . Man is only a steward here on earth, wherefore it is his duty to confine his expenditures to a small minimum. Why should one be jealous of his neighbor who is leading a life of luxury?" Groote was so liberal in his almsgiving that sometimes he had nothing left, and he had to ask one of his friends for a small loan. In his poverty and saving and almsgiving he tried to imitate the life of Christ. "O Lord of all riches," he exclaimed, "why did you elect such humble garments? Why did you choose to sit on an ass which was found tied to a gate near a public road, upon which even the humblest man was free to ride, and worse, upon a colt upon whose back no man had ever sat, as it had thus far been used for the meanest sort of employment? Rejoice, ye poor ones, for this seeming poverty is but a guise, since He, though poor in earthly goods, was master of all, magnificent, royal, divine. Follow in His footsteps, ascend the road which leads from ignominy to glory, from toil and strife to peace and rest, to heights sublime." [48]

John Calvin would have been amazed, had he been told that in

[48] A. Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance,* pp. 21, 32.

the twentieth century a wealthy business man would be cited as exemplifying his attitude toward the art of money-making. John D. Rockefeller was indeed an adept in this art. He also believed that he knew how to spend his money to the best interests of society as a whole. He may well have found the perfect way to glorify God, but if he did, his way was far removed from that which Calvin would have pointed out to him when a boy in his catechism. The stern reformer reasoned that man needed much time for sanctification, which would have to be preceded by penitence. One should fear God, it is true, because one could make no progress until he fully realized the nature of sin. This is exactly what the Catholics also taught, for the Christian religion demanded much concentration on the process of sanctification.

The Geneva Catechism of 1545 is divided into four sections. The first is entitled, On Faith; the second, On Law; the third, On Prayer; and the fourth, On the Sacraments. The fourth is obviously based entirely upon the New Testament, while the third is devoted to the Lord's Prayer. The first, as we saw, covers the Apostle's Creed, thus leaving only one section out of four to a discussion of the law, that is, the Ten Commandments. This arrangement is typical of the Calvinist faith. The Heidelberg Catechism also devotes one section to the Ten Commandments. It is reminiscent of the message left by the Christ, who said that He had not come to destroy the law and the prophesies, but to fulfill them.

The Second Helvetic Confession, dated 1562, contains a chapter in which faith and good works are described. It was prepared by Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli at Zurich, who attempted to arrive at a compromise between Zwingli and Calvin, in order that all the Swiss churches might unite in confessing one and the same creed. In this chapter on faith and good works, the fifth section is illuminating. It may be translated thus: "We believe, therefore, that good works are generated by living faith through the Holy Spirit, and are manifested by the believers in accordance with the will or the rule of the Word of God. For the Apostle Peter says: 'And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love.' As we have said above, the law of God is

the will of God, the formula for our good works. And the Apostle says, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter." [49]

A study of the relation between Calvinism and capitalism in the German section of the Rhine valley (the Rhineland) will throw welcome light on the practical results of the creeds and decisions of the local synods during the sixteenth century. Such a study was made by a competent German scholar, who published his treatise on the subject in one of the best economic journals in Europe.[50] He observed that both Weber and Troelsch had based their theories upon an inadequate study of the original sources,[51] and proceeds to repair some of the damage done by these two writers. He argues that it is a queer way to write an account about Calvinism in the Rhineland by paying no attention to the original sources and to indvidual facts, and by quoting from Anglo-Saxon writers, as if they, living across the sea, could be relied upon to show how capitalism was affected in the Rhineland by German and Dutch Calvinists.

Another serious error committed by Weber at least, so continues the author, is the failure to study the social and economic views of Calvin himself, which remarkable folly is not yet sufficiently abhorred by several writers today. Weber quotes primarily from the latter generations of Calvinists, and so distorts his own structure of reasoning. Calvin showed a decidedly anti-capitalistic attitude in frowning upon all attempts to secure a superabundance of temporal riches, and by condemning the consumption of luxuries. Moreover, too much emphasis has been placed upon the significance of the "calling" in the development of Calvinism, but the repeated references to the duty of hard work and saving are the sound feature of the Weber thesis.

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[49] Müller, *l.c.*, p. 193; Schaff, *l.c.*, p. 269.

[50] J. Hashagen, "Kalvinismus und Kapitalismus am Rhein," in *Schmoller's Jahrbuch*, Vol. XLVII (1924), pp. 49-72.

[51] J. Hashagen, *l.c.*, pp. 49-50: "In der Tat haben sich die beiden Forscher, die jenen Zusammenhang am kräftigsten betonen und sich ihn als beinahe unverbrüchlich vorstellen, Max Weber und Ernst Troeltsch, ausdrücklich auf 'rheinische Verhältnisse' und 'niederrheinisches Leben' berufen, ohne allerdings, wie die Kritik mit Recht bemerkt hat, ihre allgemeinen Behauptungn mit Einzeltaten zu stützen, die ihnen hier nur die rheinisch-protestantische Wirtschaftsgescichte hätte liefern können."

In one of the first Rhineland synods, that held in 1573 at Cologne, the local synod at Bedbur was urged to restrict the activities of those church members who lent money at high rates of interest: "That the pastors punish all immoderate gain, which is contrary to the Christian spirit of love." In the subsequent synodal conferences, the advice was always the same, namely, to consider the precepts of Christian charity, to take no interest from the poor, to work for a living. Furthermore, the German synods were constantly kept informed about the decisions made by the Dutch Calvinists, and thus their own conservatism was easily maintained. Speculation in grain is condemned. On the other hand, the needs of commerce and industry are recognized more speedily than was done by the contemporary Lutherans.

The influence exerted by Calvinism in the Rhineland exemplifies the ethical phase of Calvinism which closely resembles socialism, and which must be described as decidedly hostile to capitalism. A quotation is then given by the author from the writer who devoted, as we saw above, a whole book to the influence exerted by Butzer upon the economic views of Calvin: "Many a thought uttered by Calvin about the relation between employer and employee, between labor and capital, would fit perfectly into the program of a socialist. If this emphasis upon the duty of both parties had been perpetuated, capitalism would have assumed a very different form from that which it eventually adopted." The chief error in the Weber-Troeltsch thesis and in the researches which produced the thesis, according to the author, is therefore the failure to recognize the spiritual and moral antithesis between Calvinism and capitalism.[52]

Other retarding factors noted by the author are the conservative domestic relationships, the domination of certain well-established families, and the insistence on charity. Whenever an industrious person heaped up a surplus of capital, he was morally obliged to shed it by increasing wages or by distributing alms. We might add the observation here that the simplicity of the Calvinist type of architecture, with its lack of decorations; the hostility displayed by the Calvinists toward any sign of worldliness in clothing or recreation;

[52] J. Hashagen, *l.c.*, p. 60. It should be noted, however, that Calvin, in recommending amicable relations between employer and employee, advocated what all Christians have always practised: *charity*.

and the principle of Christian charity cannot have helped the expansion of trade and industry. It has always been my impression that the frugality of medieval Europe, so scrupulously maintained by the Calvinists, and so clearly observable in the structure of continental society even in our time, was a deterrent factor in the growth of capitalism. The average European family is shocked when it first learns how the average American laborer "wastes" a large part of his wages in the purchase of "unnecessary luxuries." The way in which we despise old houses, old clothes and outworn plumbing fixtures is a profound mystery to the typical European. I understand that the more money is spent by the masses of the people, the more demand is created for manufactured goods, and the more prosperity is thus created. The Calvinist of the sixteenth century did not dare to buy more clothes than he absolutely had to have; he did not feel free to enlarge his business enterprise for fear the pastor or the elders would accuse him of wordliness; and he did not concentrate all his attention on increasing the margin of profit in his business, knowing that he was expected to share his profits equally with his help.

In examining the general aspect of Protestantism in the sixteenth century, and in comparing it with Catholicism, it begins to look very much as if either has been generally studied altogether too much without considering the principal features of the other. The emphasis on the duty of hard work and saving, on almsgiving and simplicity is so typically medieval, and so typically European, that thus far the whole problem which we have been discussing has been rather badly treated because of prejudice in favor of a certain theory or a certain religious system. Denifle and Grisar, in depicting the life and character of Luther, have marred a magnificent piece of scholarship by ridiculous exhibitions of personal bias, thus often undermining their own workmanship. Many of the Protestants, on the other hand, are so deeply impressed by the superiority of Protestantism, that they cannot adjust their minds sufficiently to see that in many cases the good qualities in certain Protestant leaders are merely there because all virtuous Christians have possessed them.[53]

[53] An example of exaggerated praise on the part of a Calvinist scholar is the article by Professor H. H. Kuyper, "Calvin et la Hollande," in *Bulletin de l' Histoire du Protestantisme français,* Vol. LXXXIV (1935), p. 147. Here we are informed that the Dutch banking system, the Dutch colonial empire and Dutch naval power were all

What we need particularly at the present time is more extensive study and a more unbiased interpretation of the original sources.

The spread of Calvinism in Hungary, its subsequent decline, and its recent revival will furnish an excellent illustration of how little Calvinism aided the growth of capitalism. The Reformed Church in 1935 counted 1,813,000 members in Hungary, and nearly one million more members belonged to the Hungarian Reformed Church outside the boundaries of what now constitutes Hungary. Although Calvinism is said to have aided the Hungarians in the past when fighting for national independence, even so enthusiastic a disciple of Calvin as Professor Emeric Révész of the University of Debreczen has to admit that Calvinism could not help the economic life of Hungary. In an excellent study of the history of Calvinism, based on numerous original sources, he reports that "we cannot find in the lives of the Hungarians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a trace of the political and economic ideas of Calvinism." [54] He thinks that is largely owing to the fact that there are so few documents left of the period. However, he notes a little farther that "in the field of economics, Calvinism could not operate very well, because Hungarian commerce, which flourished in the sixteenth century, was largely destroyed by the Turks and the Habsburgs in the seventeenth century. The relations between Hungary and western Europe were broken up just as Calvinist ideas were ready to influence the economic life." Nevertheless, so continues the author, "the most flourishing period of Calvinist theology in Hungary was the first half of the seventeenth century." Does this not indicate clearly that secular forces must be closely followed in determining how commerce and industry expanded or declined? These secular forces must be seen in their relationship with the religious ideas.

The history of Calvinism in Scotland is so destructive to the Weberian thesis that the supporters of this thesis scrupulously avoid this subject as a rule. Professor G. D. Henderson writes: "The Scottish theological and ecclesiastical system was traditionally Calvinistic from the time of John Knox and of the 'Scots Confession'

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the direct result of the coming of Calvinism to the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. Secular forces are enirely ignored.

[54] "L'Influence du Calvinisme sur la Réforme hongroise," in *Bulletin, Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme français,* LXXXIVe, Annee (1935), p. 95.

and 'First Book of Discipline' which so largely expressed his thought and will. The influence of Geneva continued, Beza in particular being well known and highly esteemed; but it was the developments of Presbyterianism which took place in France that came to be the basis for the organization of the Scots Kirk. . . . As soon, however, as Holland secured its political independence, and showed signs of the wonderful commercial, intellectual and cultural advance which characterized it in the 17th century, there commenced very definite inter-relations with Scotland which were not without real importance for that country. . . . Calvinistic Europe was indeed one in those days as it has never since been. . . . The situation in Scotland made it inevitable that Scotland should take theological guidance from without, and in Holland it found a principal source of instruction and edification." [55]

Scotland in the seventeenth century became much more thoroughly Calvinistic than either England or Holland. But, as in the case of Hungary, the rapid spread of Calvinist ideas and theology did not by any means correspond to the development in commerce and industry. In Hungary, trade declined as Calvinism spread, while in Scotland trade lagged far behind the growth of Calvinism. And as for the relation between the expansion of industry and commerce in France and the growth of Calvinism, it can easily be demonstrated that during the second half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, when Calvinism was at the height of its power in France, economic expansion, growth of sea power and colonial expansion was in abeyance. Only with the coming to power of the great minister Colbert, after the Huguenots had been greatly weakened by Richelieu, that is, after 1660, did France finally return to its status of leadership attained previously in the thirteenth century. Three times the French tried to establish an East India Company, in imitation of the English and the Dutch, and each time their attempt was an ignominious failure. Nearly all the foreign trade of France was controlled by the Dutch for a time, just when Calvinism was very powerful politically. And I am sure that a careful study of the French sources will demonstrate the true

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[55] "Scotland and the Synod of Dort," in *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis,* New Series, Vol. XXIV (1931), pp. 1, 3.

character of Calvinism as the arch-enemy of capitalism. Such a study is now being undertaken at the University of Michigan.[56]

No amount of quotations from the sources, however, will solve our problem completely, for the main issue is still this: "By their fruits shall they know them," as Jesus concluded. The question now arises, How did capitalism originate and develop in the first two leading capitalistic nations of modern Europe, the Dutch Republic and England? What was the connection between this rising capitalism and the teachings and activities of the Calvinists or the Puritans? To this question the following two chapters will be devoted.

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[56] Unfortunately, the excellent work by B. Groethuysen, *Origines de l'esprit bourgeois en France* (Paris, 1927), pays no attention to the relation between Calvinism and capitalism. On the other hand, it does explain what certain influential Catholic writers like Massillon and Houdry said, which shows that they expressed almost exactly the same views on economic matters as did the contemporary Huguenots (pp. 167-177). Significant are the comments on pp. 213-221, dealing with the Catholic opinion on the duty to work hard, which closely resembles that of the Calvinists. Illuminating also are the references on pp. 236-295 to the relation between the Catholic Church and capitalism.

Chapter VI

CALVINISM AND CAPITALISM IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

Since in the first period of modern history the greatest and most rapid progress made by capitalism occurred in the Netherlands, it seems rather remarkable that almost no attention was paid to this phenomenon and its relation to Calvinism until the study by E. Beins appeared in 1931.[1] However, the origin and early development of Lutheranism, Calvinism and various other Protestant denominations in the Netherlands have been admirably treated by Professor L. Knappert,[2] while we are also greatly indebted to Dr. J. C. H. de Pater for his (the fourth) volume in the splendid new history of the Netherlands, in which he delineates the struggle for mastery by the Calvinists, and the resistance shown by the nationalistic group (called the "humanistic group" by the author) which followed Gansfort, Erasmus and other pupils of the Brethren of the Common Life on the one hand, and the Roman Catholics on the other hand.[3]

In Chapter IV we observed how the first widespread success of any Protestant group in the Netherlands was attained by the Anabaptists, which may have escaped the attention of those writers who have constantly harped on the theory that Calvinism was especially well suited to the temperament of the Dutch people. It is by no means an easy task to determine why the Dutch should have taken so kindly to Calvinism. The following factors, however, may help explain an apparent mystery. Firstly, the Anabaptists had been ter-

[1] "Die Wirtschaftsethik der Calvinistischen Kirche der Niederlande 1565-1650," in *Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis,* Nieuwe Serie, Vol. XXIV (1931), pp. 81-156.

[2] *Het ontstaan en de vestiging van het Protestantisme in de Nederlanden* (Utrecht, 1924).

[3] *Geschiedenis van Nederland,* edited by Prof. H. Brugmans, Vol. IV, *De Tachtigjarige oorlog* (Amsterdam, 1936), Chs. VI and VII.

ribly discredited by their ignominious failure in Westphalia. Nothing but condemnation had flowed from the pens of the great orthodox leaders of the Reformation, including Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli and Calvin. They were regarded as outcasts by men who spoke much about faith and charity, but who were very quick with their denunciations of those who differed with them. Secondly, about the middle of the sixteenth century, when Lutheranism had spent most of its offensive strength and was attempting to maintain its lead in Germany, another Protestant denomination rose with youthful vitality. It was just as natural for Calvinism to spread northward into the Netherlands and the British Isles as it had been for Lutheranism to drive northward into the three Scandinavian countries. Finally, the coming of Calvinism out of Geneva and France appeared as the last of many other movements, some religious, like monastic reforms; and others secular, like chivalry, feudalism, and higher education in the form of new universities; and still others semi-religious, like Gothic architecture. Owing to the natural flow of the rivers northward and the sloping of the land in that direction, the Netherlands absorbed much of medieval French civilization, and passed some of it on to Germany to the east.[4]

In the century between 1560 and 1660, Calvinism expanded steadily in the provinces north of the great rivers, the Rhine, Waal and Meuse. During the second half of the seventeenth century the proportion of Roman Catholics and Protestants was practically the same in the Dutch Republic as it is today in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.[5] About one-third of the population remained Catholic, most of them in the south, that is, in North Brabant and Limburg. The Calvinists comprised a little over one-half of the total, while the remainder included Lutherans and Baptists, in nearly equal proportions. Inasmuch as Calvinism was often introduced by force in many of the rural districts as well as in the cities, it cannot be said that it arose everywhere from among the masses of the people.[6]

[4] H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, Vol. I (Brussels, 1902), pp. 326-327, 336.

[5] J. de Jong, *Handboek der kerkgeschiedenis*, Vol. III, pp. 208-211.

[6] L. Knappert, *l.c.*, pp. 387-428; J. de Jong, III, 205; C. Sepp, *Het Godgeleerd Onderwijs in Nederland, gedurende de 16de en 17 de eeuw*, Vol. I (Leyden, 1873), p. 123.

In my article on "Calvinism and Capitalism in the Netherlands, 1555-1700," in the Journal of Modern History (1938), I have indicated that Calvinism was most successful in the northern regions, especially in the provinces of Groningen and Friesland. In the Frisian university at Franeker taught the voluminous writer, Sibrandus Lubbertus (1585-1625), and here also lived for a time the English professor, William Ames (Amesius), who held a chair of theology from 1622 to 1633.[7] This was the period when Franeker represented orthodox Calvinism, while Leyden between 1609 and 1621 gave employment to scholars with liberal views. Lubbertus, who was most cordial in his relations with Ames, upheld the standard of predestination at the Synod of Dordrecht. He was assisted there by Bogerman, the preacher at Leeuwarden, a stronghold of Frisian Calvinism. The fact that Bogerman was president of the Synod of Dordrecht indicates that the Frisian capital played an important part in the downfall of the Arminians, who opposed the orthodox Calvinists and rejected their doctrine of predestination.

Especially pronounced was the difference between Leyden, the university where Arminius had taught, and orthodox Franeker in the years 1611-1613, when King James I of England and his Puritan archbishop Winwood were so strongly animated with pro-Calvinist theology that they threatened the faculty of theology at Leyden with the withdrawal of all English students. The reason was that Leyden had appointed Professor Vorstius, whom James I considered a worse heretic than Arminius.[8]

The point I have raised elsewhere is this: If Calvinism had been favorable to the growth of capitalism in the Dutch Republic, it would have shown its greatest results in those regions where the largest number of persons out of each thousand became Calvinists, that is, in the northern provinces. But my researches seem to show that the northern provinces, which during the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century could compete favorably with the province of Holland, began to lag behind Holland soon after they became most decidedly Calvinist.

Furthermore, the University of Leyden in the seventeenth century

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[7] H. Visscher, *Guilielmus Amesius* (Haarlem, 1894), pp. 58-79. See also C. Sepp, *l.c.*, Vol. II (1874), pp. 3-31.

[8] See Ch. IV of my forthcoming book, *Hugo Grotius in England.*

reflected the capitalistic atmosphere of the city of Leyden, which was the home of an extensive textile industry. It was no coincidence that the Classis of Leyden and the Lower Rhine issued in 1656 a lengthy treatise in which it officially supported the bankers who loaned money at high rates of interest, up to nearly seventeen per cent. The theological faculty of the University of Utrecht, on the other hand, remained very conservative until the eighteenth century.

I have also indicated that Dutch sea power rose long before there were any Protestants in the Netherlands. It defeated the Hanseatic League in the middle of the fifteenth century, and it secured about two-thirds of the Baltic trade before the opening of the sixteenth century. Moreover, the bulk of the trade and industry in he great port of Amsterdam was originated by wealthy Catholic families. Only the lower classes in Amsterdam, the poor laborers, were, for the most part, orthodox Calvinists. Among the upper classes the Catholic, Arminian and liberal elements were predominant. It is therefore not surprising that Rembrandt, the most famous of all Dutch painters, was a liberal; Vondel, the outstanding literary figure, a Catholic; and Grotius, the well-known authority on international law, an Arminian.

Another point worth noting is that when Dutch merchants and seafarers were most energetic, that is, between 1560 and 1625, only one-fourth of the population in the Dutch Republic was Calvinistic. As Calvinism spread throughout the country, that extraordinary driving force exhibited by Dutch traders and fighters declined in almost the same proportion. I would not conclude that there is any connection between these two phenomena, but I merely present a few cold facts. Grand theories floating in the air can do much harm to credulous students of history, and the Weber-Troeltsch thesis certainly cannot be maintained in any of its ramifications by studying the relation between Calvinism and capitalism in the Dutch Republic. The three Dutch writers mentioned above, De Jong, De Pater and Knappert, have found no proof to sustain this thesis, while Beins is emphatic in denying the validity of Weber's contentions as far as the Netherlands are concerned: "Therefore the results of our labor cannot support the thesis of Weber; on the contrary it raises serious objections to it." [9]

[9] E. Beins, *l.c.*, p. 155.

It will not be superfluous to present here a summary of the work done by Beins, for he wisely started with no theory of his own and was interested primarily in facts. He quotes extensively from the following orthodox Calvinists: Professor W. Ames (Franeker); the nobleman D. van Amsweer, who helped introduce Calvinism in Groningen; the Rev. I. Cloppenburgh, who for a few years after 1640 was professor at Harderwijk in Gelderland, and also at Franeker; Professor L. Danaeus (Leyden, 1581-1582); Ph. de Marnix, one of the first Calvinists in the North; Professor A. Rivetus (Leyden, 1620-1632); the Walloon preacher J. Taffin (1529-1602); the first Dutch representative of Pietism, the Rev. W. Teellinck (1579-1629); the Rev. G. Udemans (1582-1645); Professor G. Voetius (Utrecht, 1634-1676); and the Rev. P. Wittewrongel (1609-1662). Unfortunately, this rather select and limited number of writers cannot give us a complete picture of Dutch Calvinism, nor does Beins make a distinction between theory and practice. But he was the first to do anything in the field that was of real value.

Beins first presents a discussion of divine and natural law, which is reminiscent of the scholastic writers and of Melanchthon. He next analyzes the subject so frequently debated by the orthodox Calvinists in the Netherlands until this day, namely, the difference between the state (status) of nature and the state (status) of grace. One quotation from the Rev. Wittewrongel will illuminate this point very nicely: "For those persons who are satisfied with a life which is good according to standards of society, still lie in the state of nature, notwithstanding all their virtues; and they are as yet far removed from the state of grace." A quotation from Professor Danaeus also is helpful: "It is far better to obey God than men." To these words, Beins adds this comment: "Hence the Church fought against toleration, which did not appreciate what was the only true faith, and the Church likewise set itself squarely against the lending of money on interest." [10] In short, biblical commandments were much more highly regarded by those Calvinists than were the laws and customs of men.

Beins is of the opinion (which is no doubt correct) that the leading Calvinists in the Netherlands between 1560 and 1650 shared

[10] E. Beins, *l.c.*, pp. 93, 92.

the views of their contemporaries on the most vital social, economic and political questions. Again, in common with most of their contemporaries, they based many of their opinions on the ideas propounded by the Church Fathers, and, unwittingly as a rule, by the scholastic writers. Most important of all sources of the Calvinist ethic was the second commandment given by Christ: "Love your neighbor as yourself." We have already observed how frequently the earlier writers in the Church, and Luther and Calvin as well, referred to this significant statement.

An excellent illustration of the influence of French Calvinism in the Dutch Republic is the career of Professor Rivet (Rivetus) at Leyden from 1620 to 1632, and as tutor of Prince William of Orange at The Hague from 1632 to 1650. He brought with him from France a wholesome respect for Thomas Aquinas, but he was in spite of this as good a Calvinist as any Hollander. His interpretation of usury, as we shall see presently, was thoroughly in keeping with the views expressed by Calvin, but his study of commerce and industry is based largely on the writings of Aquinas, whom he quotes repeatedly with marked approbation. Thus it happened that in his favorable comments on trade and industry he did not mention Calvin at all, since Aquinas was his model. Could this perhaps mean that in his opinion he saw more support for his viewpoint in the pages of the great *Summa theologica* than in the *Institute of the Christian Religion?* This would not surprise the present writer at all. Had not the angelic doctor shown great understanding of the realm of trade and industry, greater than that evinced by Calvin? Apparently he had.[11] For Aquinas had taught in the French metropolis at a time when France was very prosperous.

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[11] This is not the opinion, however, of the Dutch biographer, H. J. Honders, in his admirable work, *Andreas Rivetus als invloedrijk Gereformeerd theoloog in Holland's bloeitijd* (The Hague, 1930). He argues that Calvin was more advanced than Aquinas, for he considered not only the amount of work done for a certain amount of money, but also the circumstances under which the work was performed, as he states on p. 139. But if this were true, would not Rivetus gladly have availed himself of Calvin's superior knowledge? Honders quotes Calvin from P. A. Diepenhorst's book, where these words from Calvin's commentary on Psalm XV are reproduced: "Mercatores non modo se exercent laboribus, sed multa quoque incommoda et pericula subeunt." Excellent words no doubt, but they are few in number, compared with what Aquinas had to say on the subject. See F. Schreyvogl, *Ausgewählte Schriften zur Staats- und Wirtschaftslehre des Thomas von Aquino* (Jena, 1923), pp. 187-259, 353-418.

It was certainly natural that the Calvinists who were living in such hives of commerce as Amsterdam, Leyden, Haarlem and Rotterdam, looked upon trade as good and necessary. They were not opposed to the practice of arming merchant vessels, because of the many attacks by pirates and European competitors. The vocation of money changer was also considered good in itself. Here Beins refers very briefly to a question brought up before the national synod held in 1581 at Middelburg. Because of its official nature, and because many later synods constantly referred all similar questions to the decisions made here, I shall use this source also for the present discussion.

"Question. Is exchange of money (without which merchants cannot carry on in these troublous times) a legal contract, which the faithful may utilize with a clear conscience? Answer. There are two kinds of money changers. First, those who exchange foreign currency for domestic currency. These persons have been instituted by the government, or else they have means of their own with which they can maintain such operations. I conclude [wrote Professor Danaeus, who had to answer these questions] that a Christian may operate in this manner, on condition that he receive a profit which is not at variance with the rate determined upon by the local magistrates. Firstly, because merchants must be assisted in their trade, else they will suffer loss. Secondly, because Christ, when He punished the money changers who were in the temple, did this not because they were money changers but because they happened to be doing their business in the temple. Thirdly, because the contract of exchange is natural; and the things that belong to the realm of nature are permitted to the Christian, for they are a necessary part of the social order.

"The second kind of money changers are those who lend money on interest. They used to be called *Table-holders,* for in the time of the Romans they were permitted to do this work for only one-half year. This way of changing money seems to be like the first, for it is described as such in the civil law, but there is a difference. These people are permitted by the public authorities to carry on this trade, since the public demands it; or else they do it privately. The results have been most harmful to the people. It makes them lazy, for they think that now they will not need to work any more. It also makes

the usurers avaricious. It destroys the effect of love, which impels one to do good to one's neighbor. Finally, it is opposed to the commandment of Christ: "Do not lend money, hoping to receive more in return."

"But I would conclude that where the magistrates have officially tolerated the practice, the Christian Church will not oppose it, for the government is instituted under God's supervision, and in case the general public is profited by it, it will be deemed a good thing. However, one condition must be made, that the government shall stipulate in advance how much interest may be charged on the loan, and that no one may charge more than that. Moreover, those who are in financial difficulties are not to be obliged to pay any or else a very low rate of interest." [12]

We see here a repetition of the views held earlier by Luther and Calvin. Many minor regulations in the social and economic fields are to be left in the hands of the civil rulers, and Professor Rivetus added that some of these details were not mentioned by God in His Word. Neither does the Church have authority over such matters. Even when the clergy have better views on a certain subject of a political or social nature, they should first submit them to the public authorities. The latter opinion was clearly enunciated by Professor Voetius.[13]

But if anything touched the sphere of religion, the clergy were quick to intervene. When, for example, the city council in Amsterdam favored religious toleration, in order to attract more foreigners, and to enlarge the scope of commerce and industry, some of the fiery Calvinist preachers raised a loud protest, saying that it would be far better to lose some trade than to permit the heretics to preach their poisonous doctrines. The clergy also expressed dissatisfaction with the laxity of religious zeal which marked the policy of the East India Company. Professor Voetius complained rightly about the small number of conversions among the heathen in the Orient as compared with the successes attained by the Catholics. But in neither case did the clergy or the professors of theology attain more than a polite hearing. Financial gain was far more important in the eyes

[12] F. L. Rutgers, *Acta van de Nederlandsche synoden der zestiende eeuw,* in *Werken der Marnix-Vereeniging,* Series II, Vol. III (Utrecht, 1889), pp. 455-458.

[13] E. Beins, *l.c.,* pp. 99-100.

of the magistrates and the officials in the great trading companies than religious fervor. Gradually this Mammon-worship was to undermine the Calvinist faith among the upper classes. One should be careful not to confuse the liberal Calvinist, who in reality was not a Calvinist, with the orthodox Calvinist. It will not do to call every member of the Calvinist churches a typical Calvinist.

The picture drawn by Beins of the attitude of the Calvinists in the Netherlands toward the duty to work, is identical with that which we have found among the leading thinkers in the medieval Church. It is the duty of Christians and of non-Christians to work for their living, because of the sinful state of man, for this was the commandment that God gave to Adam. Those who refuse to work are robbers in the social organism. Even the rich have no right not to exert themselves. Beggars were therefore warned to leave the country or to get busy and start working. Homes and institutions were opened in order to provide the indigent with work. Those who still continued to beg were punished by the ecclesiastical authorities. On the other hand, the following persons received official condemnation: the managers of disreputable homes, dance halls, cabarets, and inns in which strong drinks were freely sold; also pirates and "Lombards." The vocation of a banker was generally regarded with great suspicion. The Rev. Cloppenburgh used almost exactly the same words in criticizing the bankers as Calvin had done: "He does not acquire an honest living who, without carrying on trade in a store or elsewhere, or without working in the fields gets rich by merely lending his money on interest."

The Dutch Calvinists were upon the whole more reactionary than Thomas Aquinas in frowning upon the attempt to exchange one vocation for another. But there was much difference of opinion among the leading thinkers, with Udemans and Teellinck favoring the liberal point of view. The Christian does not work primarily in order to get more money, and he is urged not to acquire more than a modest amount of this world's goods. Nevertheless, the Bible does not prohibit a man from becoming rich. But very little is said by the Dutch Calvinists about this point. Beins wished to leave the impression that all superfluous wealth was generally condemned, and he was right in theory. I have shown elsewhere, however, that a minister by the name of Festus Hommius, who was secretary of the

Synod of Dordrecht, and had the reputation of being very conservative, acquired a fortune of twenty-five thousand guilders. Moreover, the well-known Rev. J. Trigland, when he was a professor and a minister at Leyden, and received two handsome salaries, insisted that as pastor his salary be increased.[14]

The very fact that a person succeeded in his business enterprises was not necessarily a sign of divine favor, concludes Beins. This is an important point, for according to the Weber-Troeltsch thesis, the Calvinist was supposed to work hard and pile up riches for the glory of God. It happens that in the Netherlands the contrary view prevailed, as was to be expected of Calvinism.[15] Both good and bad people, so reasoned the Dutch Calvinists, receive temporal possessions from God, and the wicked usually get more than the others. If the Christian wants assurance of eternal salvation, he must first of all develop his religious and moral talents. The desire to obtain temporal wealth is a sign of lack of faith in God. The superfluous riches of this world lead only to danger to the soul.

The same insistence upon moderation is seen in the frequent allusions to the need of relaxation from too much physical labor, from worry about business affairs, from cares about the things of this world. Again, this could be expected of Calvinism, for this religion was fundamentally an attempt to perpetuate the simplicity and the spiritual power of the primitive Christian church. Those who seek the source of capitalism in pure anti-capitalism will encounter many painful difficulties in studying the relation between Calvinism and capitalism in the Dutch republic. The theory of the just price, discussed by Beins, also indicates no departure from the principles maintained within the medieval Church. Monopolies were condemned by the Dutch Calvinists as they had been condemned previously by the scholastic writers and by Luther. However, the East India Company and the West India Company were treated as exceptions to the general rule, for their duty was to keep foreign capital and trade out of the Dutch colonies. Again, the Dutch Calvinists were careful to adjust themselves to widely accepted theories.

The last subject discussed by Beins is that of lending money on

[14] See H. W. ter Haar, *Jacobus Trigland* (The Hague, 1891), p. 93.
[15] E. Beins, *l.c.*, p. 123.

interest. Inasmuch as this discussion of his is largely based on the reading of secondary sources only, I have taken up this question more fully in the article mentioned above. My opinion is that the Dutch Calvinists scrupulously followed Calvin throughout. They did not fight against all forms of lending on interest, but against high rates of interest, and they insisted that no one had the right to exact iterest on a loan made to the poor. The rates that they proposed were lower than those authorized by Luther. Even the rate of five per cent was considered too high, but this was partly due to the circumstance that money rates in the Dutch Republic were very low in the seventeenth century. Three per cent seemed a high rate of interest. Beins concludes correctly that the Dutch Calvinists up to the year 1650 developed no new theory about interest, because they were unwilling to break with anything that had been said in the Bible. They were more anxious about this point than most of the scholastic writers.

One of the most important original sources which throw light upon the relation between Calvinism and capitalism is a lengthy treatise published in 1657 by the theological faculty of the University of Utrecht. It is the second part of the *Res Judicata*.[16] The first part, which is much shorter, was published in 1646. The second part is a reply to a treatise prepared by the Classis of Leyden and the Lower Rhine which appeared in 1656. This treatise and the first part of the *Res Judicata* I have analyzed in my article. We shall now see what the theologians in the University of Utrecht contributed to the problem in 1657.

The first chapter contains numerous quotations from the Bible, and emphasizes the point that the poor are not to pay interest on money loaned to them, wherefore all finance companies are under condemnation. Moreover, everybody has had to pay rates that were far too high, and the profits acquired by the wicked usurers have not been in keeping with the amount of profit earned in legitimate enterprises by all others. The second chapter presents a long list of quotations from the Church Fathers, the synods of the Dutch churches up to 1657, and the Reformed theologians, beginning with Calvin. This list is useful in that it helps us understand how

[16] *Tweede deel van Res judicata, Over de Negotie der genaemde Lombarden* (Knuttel, No. 7907).

the leading Dutch Calvinists arrived at their theories on economic problems. The Church Fathers quoted in order are Lactantius, Chrysostom, Augustine, Ambrose, and Gregory the Great.

There is no need to go over all the pertinent decisions of the Dutch synods, most of which I have discussed in my article. But to illustrate the tenacity with which the Calvinist ministers upheld the old antagonism against the lending of money on interest until the civil authorities finally compelled them to withdraw their opposition, I reproduce here the decision made at the provincial synod of Overyssel held at Kampen in 1656: "A certain young man who was merely a bookkeeper in a finance company, declared that he had no part in the operation of the said bank except drawing his salary as clerk and bookkeeper, and requested that he be accepted as member of the local congregation at Zwolle and be permitted to partake of the sacrament of Communion. Question: May this be permitted? Answer: The synod decides that it cannot be permitted."

Immediately after the numerous references to synodal decisions follow the pronouncements by leading Protestant theologians. With characteristic Protestant bias, the theological faculty, led by Professor Voetius, ignored completely the views of all the Christian scholars between Gregory the Great and the Protestants. The first writer to follow St. Gregory is of course John Calvin, and it is significant to find Voetius quoting exactly the same reference in the letter of 1545 which in recent years has been hailed as some sort of turning point in the history of modern Europe. Even H. M. Robertson, the outstanding opponent of Max Weber and the author of a very successful attack on Weber's thesis, finds that he can do no better than accept the findings of Henri Hauser, and he admits that there is something decidedly new in the letter to Sachins.[17]

Professor Voetius in 1657 was better informed about Calvinism than most writers of the twentieth century. He not only used the letter of 1545, which receives more attention than any other contemporary source, but he also quotes from the commentary on Ezekiel XVIII, and that on Exodus XXII. He concludes with this reference: "When even secular writers have classed usury among the shameful and dishonest operations, how much more insufferable

[17] *Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism*, pp. 115-116.

must it be considered among the children of God." Calvin, by the way, had mentioned the opinion expressed by Plato.

The next authority quoted is obviously Beza, the successor of Calvin at Geneva. The quotation is from the Sermon on the Passion of Christ, No. XXXVI: "Come here, you usurers, pestilence of the world; you founders of monopolies who combine to exploit the misery of the needy to enrich yourselves, and under the pretext of aiding them, you suck them dry up to the marrow in their bones." It is curious that when Luther talked in this vein, as we saw, he is branded today as the reactionary son of a peasant, but exactly the same words coming from the pen of Calvin or Beza are seen in an entirely different light. I have a suspicion that Hauser especially has greatly exaggerated the influence of environment upon the genesis of Calvin's thoughts. Doumergue has likewise made the same error, though in a lesser degree.

Next follows more than a page from the writings of Jerome Zanchius, and then a paragraph from Professor Francis Junius' books. The objection to usury by these two scholars consisted chiefly in the idea that no interest should be exacted from the poor. An important passage from the next writer, Professor Lambert Danaeus, is reproduced here: "First, that it is forbidden to practice usury can easily be proved by referring to several texts in the Scriptures (Exodus XXII, 15; Lev. XXV, 35; Deut. XXIII, 19), which we do not interpret as being merely a political prohibition, as may be gathered from Psalm XV, 5; Proverbs XXVIII, 8; Ezekiel XVIII, 8; Jer. XV, 10. And in the New Testament there is to be found a passage, Luke VI, 35, 'Lend,' etc., to which may be added Deut. XXIII, 29. . . . In case we come to the assistance of a brother who is in need of help in order to provide food and clothing for his family, it will be against nature and the commandments of Christ if anyone charges him interest on the loan. There are times when we must even let him keep the principal, as is urged in Luke VI, 35; and also many times in other sources, as for example, in Gregory the Great in reply to a letter, Book VII, Ep. XXXVII. But when we lend money to a brother who uses it to increase his stock or to purchase real estate, or to improve his property therewith, we may charge interest on our loan."

Very important material for our study is to be found in the pro-

nouncements of Professor Andrew Rivetus at Leyden, according to Voetius, who, after referring to the decision made by three professors at Leyden in 1627, mentioned in the first part of the *Res Judicata,* quotes from a letter by Rivetus, dated April 2, 1638: "I have had an earnest discussion with the excellent Salmasius [Saumaise] with reference to the Lombards, and I explained to him that they go far beyond the limits set for the Christians, as I have shown in my lectures on the Ten Commandments. He said that he had read them, but that he could nevertheless not change his mind. He bases his arguments on this point that, as we all agree, usury is not prohibited by divine law, and that it is entirely a question of degree of usury. The rate of interest is to be determined by the magistrates, and if the bankers do not exceed these rates, they should not be prevented from partaking of the sacrament of communion.

"I answered him, saying that the magistrates sometimes tolerate practices because of the hardness of men's hearts, and that sins are committed not only in the degree of usury but also in charging the poor when we know they should not be expected to pay any interest at all. Those who lend money, although security is given, cannot always avoid loss and damage to themselves; but those who lend to the poor take no chance at all. They are certain to recover their principal and to obtain the interest as well, because of the precautions they always take in securing the requisite pawn. It also is wrong to make a regular profession out of money-lending, so that one does not do anything else. He answered that he had just finished his treatise *On Usury,* which is to be printed at once, and which was to satisfy everybody. I observed that he had been sufficiently embittered by the writing of . . . I shall do as much as I can to tone him down, and I shall try to persuade him not to give offense to anyone. I have also been criticized by others for having attacked the Lombards in my capacity as professor."

It should be noted that the philologian Salmasius, who taught the classics at Leyden, cannot be quoted as a typical Calvinist, as has been pointed out by E. Beins.[18] Beins was correct in his decision not to include any of Salmasius' works in his bibliography, and it is to be hoped that in the future those writers who discuss the relation between Calvinism and capitalism in the Dutch Republic before

[18] See his treatise, p. 158, note 3.

having thoroughly investigated the subject, will at least remember this point about Salmasius, for he was generally considered unorthodox in the Netherlands.

Before Voetius quoted the letter of 1638 dealing with this subject, he mentioned another statement reflecting the attitude of the orthodox Calvinists toward the "Mountains of Piety" maintained by the Catholic authorities. Rivetus condemned even those institutions, for they charged the poor at least a small amount of interest on loans. The Dutch Calvinists desperately clung to the biblical injunction against exacting any interest of the poor at all. Salmasius, on the other hand, approached the Catholic position, which favored capitalism more than did the Calvinist viewpoint. Again we see proof of the fundamental weakness in the Weber-Troeltsch thesis, which is built upon inadequate study of Calvinism and is as a result the exact reverse of the actual truth, namely, that Calvinism was more hostile to capitalism than was Catholicism.

Another contemporary reference to Salmasius by an orthodox Calvinist is given by Voetius on the page (24) following that on which the letter of 1638 by Rivetus appears. The reference is taken from two letters by John Polyander, dated respectively August 7 and 27, 1640: "After having related his information about his conference with Salmasius and the warning addressed by him to this scholar, he concludes as follows: 'That interest may not be exacted of the poor, nor may pawns be accepted from them.' Consequently, the Lombards show by their deeds that they are devoid of true love, see I Cor. XIII. For love does not seek that which is its own, but rather the welfare of one's neighbor. They, on the other hand, are not interested in their neighbor but only in themselves. They are indeed so far removed from charity that, contrary to Isaiah LVIII (where we are exhorted to cover the poor with clothes) they do not cover the poor with clothes but take away from them their last garments. When the poor cannot redeem these clothes, they are then sold at a great loss." Professor Polyander was one of the four members of the theological faculty at Leyden which in 1627 issued an official pronouncement against usury, the other three being Rivetus, Anthony Waleus, and Anthony Thysius.[19]

Now follows a reference to the theological dispute held at the

[19] See my article in *The Journal of Modern History* (1938).

University of Franeker, in which Professor Makowsky upheld the orthodox Calvinist position. The first part of the *Res Judicata* reproduced the propositions numbered 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25. They all are devoted merely to the question of taking interest from the poor.[20] The next reference is to a well-known work by Professor William Ames, *On the Conscience,* Chapter XLIV, as it is to be found in the first part of the *Res Judicata.* Here Ames makes this statement: "The Holy Scriptures forbid (1) the taking of interest from the poor who are forced to borrow money, in which case the prohibition is based upon the condition of the person who borrows the money; (2) usury which 'bites,' that is, when the interest charged inflicts harm upon the debtor; (3) usury which conflicts with Christian love, see Luke VI, 35." [21]

Professor Henry Alting of Heidelberg and later of Groningen, published in 1646 his *Theological Problems,* from which the theologians at Utrecht next quote to secure further ammunition: "Although the Jews in our republic must not be permitted to practice unfair usury and take money from the poor Christians, they nevertheless sin less than do the Christian usurers, for they do not exact interest from their own brothers, and in charging the Christians, they still remain faithful to the Mosaic Law, which gave them such permission to collect interest from strangers. Christians, on the other hand, in exacting interest, do so against the voice of their own conscience. But the magistrates commit the greatest sin by urging the Jews to continue their evil work of usury, or at least by openly permitting it. Such is alas the case in Germany and elsewhere."

After presenting extracts from the works of four other Calvinist theologians,[22] Voetius and his colleagues give two important passages of considerable length from the treatises of the Rev. Godfried Udemans and the Rev. Cloppenburgh. Udemans was one of the delegates sent by the province of Zeeland in 1618-1619 to the international synod at Dordrecht, thus proclaiming his orthodox views. He has been quoted rather frequently by Beins, and for a very good

[20] That Makowsky was an orthodox Calvinist may be seen in A. Kuyper, Jr., *Johannes Maccovius* (Leyden, 1899), pp. 200-314.

[21] H. M. Robertson (*l.c.,* p. 130) is under the impression that Ames was the first Calvinist pastor to "decide in favour of the liberal side." But he gives no reference to any source, either original or secondary.

[22] These are Amandus Polanus, Tilenus, Wendelinus and Festus Hommius.

reason. A few sentences from his commentary on the Eighth Commandment are reproduced here.

"Unjust usury is the filthy and dishonest profit that a person obtains by lending his own money or goods against the law of love and equity. This is a dreadful sin whereby our neighbor's substance is secretly drawn away, hence the Hebrew word used to describe usury, which signifies 'bite.' This is a sign of piety that a person does not lend his money on interest. . . . Nevertheless, it is not forbidden to make a profit with one's money or with goods, for there is no reason why one may not earn money that way, just as he does when he rents his fields or his houses, on condition that our neighbor can make exactly as much profit with our money as we can. The only question that remains is whether or not one abides by the law of justice and equity. There are, for example, many orphans, widows and other persons who invest their money without working with it themselves, and who depend very largely upon this income from their investments. It is from their cash that they must derive their means of making a living. . . . But the Lombards do not follow the law of love and justice, for they take from the poor the very articles that they cannot do without, such as their clothes, blankets, beds, etc."

Udemans addresses the rich with the following significant words: "We exhort all rich persons that they reflect upon the day of the final judgment, where we must all appear, and that for this reason they will treat their neighbors as they hope that God will deal with their souls. On the other hand, I enjoin all persons with moderate or lesser means that they are diligent in their work or business, that they are careful in their expenditures, their food, clothing, and drinking; careful to refrain from the necessity of borrowing money; careful not to borrow more than they need for their business enterprise. He who jumps farther than the length of his pole will fall into the ditch. It is not so important to operate a large concern as to have one that is well conducted and free from heavy obligations. But in case you will simply have to borrow from the rich, beware of the snares of the fowlers, as Solomon said, Prov. VI, 5. You had better sell some of your property rather than pawn it. One intelligent person once remarked: 'Although it were better to suffer hunger than to sell his property, it is still better to sell a portion of it rather than

to burden the whole with debt. For what else is usury than the poison that consumes all of a person's property?' "

The Rev. Cloppenburgh, who is often referred to as a liberal theologian, nevertheless may be classified with the orthodox Calvinists. Five pages (30-35) filled with extracts from his writings show that he agreed fully with Voetius on the question of the so-called "Table-keepers," the persons who made their living from the operation of finance companies, taking no risks whatever at any time, and charging interest on money loaned to the poor. Cloppenburgh, in his capacity as professor of theology at Franeker, was as much opposed to permitting these persons to attend the Communion service, as was Voetius himself.

From the Calvinist authorities, the editors of the second part of the *Res Judicata* turn to the Lutherans. But they do not quote from Luther himself. Only at the end of the list of extracts from the Lutheran and Arminian writers, he is mentioned briefly as the author of "the book *On Usury.*" Similarly, Melanchthon only receives one line. But one Balthasar Meisner is honored with nearly two pages (39-40), and at the end of his passage there is reference to several church councils and to the pertinent pronouncements to be found in the Canon Law, which is a remarkable thing to do for a Protestant at the close of the sixteenth century. Three Arminian, or Remonstrant, theologians are quoted next, to convince the Arminians that they also have no right to protect the Lombards. On p. 43 there follow the names of thirteen other theologians, among them Luther, Melanchthon and Lancelot Andrewes, a distinguished English writer, whom we shall meet in a following chapter.

The jurists are also utilized for an examination of their contribution to the subject of usury. The first writer mentioned is Charles Molinaeus, the French jurist Du Moulin, who is considered by Doumergue as the greatest jurist of the sixteenth century; [23] and as the author of his well-known work, *Treatise on Contracts and Usury,* published in 1547, he preceded Calvin to some extent in his scholarly exposition on usury. Voetius was of the opinion that this treatise had been published as early as 1516. He says that many scholars, not only Calvinists and Lutherans but also Catholics, have made use of this treatise, and appeal to the pronouncements made by the

[23] E. Doumergue, *l.c.,* Vol. V, pp. 686-687.

famous author. Voetius appears to be quite satisfied with the opinions of this jurist. His verdict runs thus: "In Nos. 85 and 86 he makes a distinction between persons who are poor and those who have a little more. Both classes are not to pay interest on loans. But rich people who borrow money in order to buy more property, are permitted to borrow money and to pay interest." This is especially true of merchants, and Voetius adds that according to the author he derived his opinion from a theologian in Paris who presented an exposition of the teachings contained in Psalm XLI, and also from the reading of a learned work by John Aepinus on Psalm XV.

Hugo Grotius is quoted among the following seven jurists, the extract having been taken from the work, *On the Right of War and Peace,* Part II, Ch. XII, par. 20, including the two passages quoted by Grotius from Lactantius and Ambrose. The list concludes with a passage taken from the decisions of the provincial synod of Overyssel made in June 1645. The reference to Salmasius is reproduced here to show what was the official opinion of this professor among the Calvinist clergymen: "As far as the person and the affair of Salmasius are concerned, who employs his pen so freely in support of usury, and who has made contemptuous and supercilious comments about decisions made by various synods, the question has been referred to the committee."

The remaining 116 pages are devoted to an attack upon the magistrates who have abolished the finance companies instituted by the Lombards and have founded in their places new "banks of loaning." Included in the learned arguments is a reply to the lengthy treatise issued by the Classis of Leyden and the Lower Rhine in the year 1656, which treatise I have analyzed elsewhere. This reply throws welcome light on the attitude displayed by the orthodox theologians who, far removed from the bustle of the great industries at Leyden, Haarlem and Amsterdam, could continue to hurl at their enemies the biblical injunctions against usury.

There is room here for only one of the many arguments adduced by Voetius and his colleagues. It is an answer to the statement made by the pastors at Leyden when referring to a decision drawn up in 1581 by the national synod held at Middelburg. The pastors alleged that at the time this synod was held, the ministers in the Netherlands had so recently left the Catholic church that they had not yet freed

themselves sufficiently from the canonical prohibitions of lending money on interest. The reply by the theologians of Utrecht in 1657 is significant:

"We do not know just what is meant by this phrase, 'the raw Reformation.' Does it refer to the question of doctrine, as Arminius averred, saying that we should not pay any attention to what had been taught in the past but to what was to be taught in the future? . . . Do they wish to have it understood that the Reformation has gone too far, or not far enough, or too suddenly, as Grotius wishes to imply in his *Pietas Ordinum,* where he claims that the Reformation has reformed more than was necessary? Let those New Reformers come along and show us where there has been done too little, what has been overlooked, where there has been too much reform, where things were changed in a haphazard fashion, in what respects reforms were carried through that made conditions worse, and where the reformers were too harsh or too precise. Then we shall formulate our answers. If they allege that the pastors and theologians in this country at that time did not possess adequate understanding of the problem of usury, that they would have been willing to permit the Lombards to partake of the sacrament of Communion, but were afraid of the Canon Law, we shall reply that this is just simply guess work.

"The Reformers knew what the Church had been formerly, and they knew the papacy and its rule in this country. The synods in setting up the churches paid less attention to the old Church and its Canon Law, even in outward ceremonies, church government and discipline (let alone the question of doctrine) than what these people think, as may be gathered from the decisions of the synods and the church ordinances, as well as from the acts of the *classes* and the consistories of the local churches. If they had only considered the problem of permitting the Lombards to partake of the sacrament of Communion, they would have said that usury in itself was only a permissible practice, or a matter of slight harm to anyone, as was done in many such cases. But what the churches have thought of the question may be seen in the records of 1581, 1629, and 1631. They were at no time afraid of this ghost, this Canon Law. This guess work ought to be substantiated, for otherwise similar arguments will be adduced concerning many other problems.

And the resolutions made by the synods, our liturgy, our catechism, our confession of faith and the Canons of the Synod of Dordrecht would become subject to reservations and exceptions, so that white would become black and a square would become a circle through all this rhetoric and this talk."

The rest of the treatise may be summarized as follows. The provincial synod of South Holland, in which Leyden was located, had finally come to a point where it did not know how to proceed. If it admitted that the *classis* of Leyden and the Lower Rhine was correct in concluding that the "table-keepers" (who were supported by the municipal governments) should suddenly be considered as worthy of the Holy Supper, then all the preceding national and provincial synods had been in the wrong, But how could this be? How could the Christian Church permit anyone who exacted interest from money loaned to the poor to partake of the sacrament of Communion? For had he not committed a grievous sin against the Word of God?

Fortunately perhaps for all parties concerned, the provincial estates of North Holland, owing to the powerful capitalistic elements in the great port of Amsterdam, determined in 1658 to end the whole controversy by informing the clergy that henceforth the State and not the Church should decide what a banker was permitted to do with money loaned to anybody. Thereafter the synods no longer discuss the problem, except by briefly referring to the decision made by the civil authorities. Capitalism had finally overcome the spirit of orthodox Calvinism.[24]

We are now prepared to examine the question of how capitalism developed in the Dutch Republic if it was not aided at all by Calvinism, or perhaps in spite of Calvinism? H. M. Robertson must be congratulated for having made a sound observation about the present revival of industry in the kingdom of the Netherlands, which is showing greater progress in the Catholic provinces than in the north.[25] Here, then, we have definite proof of the fact that trade and industry are not dependent on either the Protestant or the Catholic religion, but on certain secular forces. Most notable is the rapid growth of Eindhoven in North Brabant from a village of fewer than

[24] See my article in *The Journal of Modern History* (1938).

[25] See his book, *The Rise of Economic Individualism,* pp. 171-172.

five thousand inhabitants to a town of over seventy-five thousand. Tilburg in the same province has a similar expansion to its credit. I do not know where Robertson got the information to show, however, that "it appears to be only in Zealand that the country remains predominantly Calvinist—and Zealand is the least progressive of the provinces, a province of fishermen and farmers." The northern provinces today contain no larger a percentage of Catholics than they possessed three hundred years ago. The ratio between Protestants and Catholics in the Netherlands is almost exactly the same as it was in the second half of the seventeenth century and at any time since that century.

Dutch sea power was making tremendous strides before the Reformation began. The textile industries in the province of Holland; the herring fishery which had grown from humble beginnings in Zeeland about the year 1425 to enormous proportions by 1525; the proximity of Antwerp, Ghent and Brussels; the growth of commerce with England and the Baltic Sea in the fifteenth century, accompanied by the destruction of the Hansa League; the shipbuilding industries with their constant output of new ships seeking employment; the shifting of the great trade routes from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic seaboard; the unfortunate experiences of the provinces in the southern Netherlands, to be known for a time as the Spanish Netherlands, in losing the bulk of their trade and industries to Holland and England; the weakening of French competition in the eastern Mediterranean, owing to the civil and religious wars raging in France between 1562 and 1593; the decline of both French and Venetian sea power in the second half of the sixteenth century; and the annexation of Portugal in 1580 by the king of Spain—these and other factors not so easily recognized by scholars, combined to give the Dutch a decided advantage over their European neighbors. Then, as the seventeenth century opened, the English queen passed away, and for forty-six years England was ruled by two Stuart monarchs who were not interested much in the development of English trade and sea power. In short, in the period between 1500 and 1650 a number of fortuitous circumstances aided the Dutch in securing about one-half of the seaborne trade of Europe, more than one-half of the important fisheries in the North Sea, a large portion of the textile industries of the European coun-

tries, fifty per cent of all the merchant vessels in the western world, the bulk of the lucrative spice trade, and the finest tropical colonies.

One should think that Max Weber might have been content with the field in which he was recognized everywhere as an authority, instead of trying to cover the realm of religion and theology as well. A professor of sociology is not likely to upset and reform the course of theological studies in our great universities. So it naturally happened that Weber got himself embroiled in the task of presenting a badly distorted analysis of the doctrine of predestination. That distortion did not shock many liberal thinkers who knew no better than he, but an expert like Doumergue showed his readers very plainly what was wrong with the Weber thesis as far as the doctrine of predestination was concerned.

The rise of capitalism in the Dutch Republic is a subject of sufficient importance to have enabled Weber the opportunity of making a real contribution to the history of modern Europe, inasmuch as all the vital factors involved in this development were of a secular nature. The growth of Calvinism, Lutheranism and the independent denominations did not expedite the process of economic advancement among the Dutch. They may have delayed it, but if so, the rise of sea power and of industry and commerce was so powerfully supported by the factors which I have briefly indicated that under either Catholicism or Calvinism they would have broken through the barriers of competition furnished by the other great powers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

A. Fanfani has done much useful work in pointing out how capitalism developed in Italy before it spread to the Netherlands, but the dragon of nationalism which is destroying the world today affected his mind in such measure that he could not see how the Netherlands took over the scepter of commercial dominion as soon as it was seized from the Italians. He argues that there is no need to study the relationship between Calvinism and capitalism in the Netherlands during the sixteenth century, because this region declined in that century. As proof he cites the fact that the Venetian galleys which used to sail to the Netherlands each year up to 1532, ceased going there after this year. The thought seems never to have occurred to Fanfani that the rapidly rising sea power of the Dutch and Flemings

rendered the voyages of the Venetian merchants unprofitable.[26]

How important secular forces are in the growth of commerce and industry, may be seen in studying the history of the Baltic trade. From 1598 to 1613, when Puritanism was very powerful in England, at least in the field of religion and theology, an average of fewer than 250 English ships passed through the Sound each year; in the period from 1614 to 1640, the average was practically the same, although (or because?) the government of England was very hostile to the Puritans; from 1641 to 1657, when the Puritans and Independents controlled the government, the average was below 100; but from 1678 to 1688 it was over 500, despite the power of the Anglicans and the Restoration of 1660; from 1723 to 1740 it was about 1,000; and from 1751 to 1775 it was over 1400. England's merchant marine increased about as fast as Calvinism and Puritanism in England declined, although there is probably no connection between these two phenomena.

In the Dutch Republic we also witness a remarkable process. Whereas the province of Holland controlled about one-half of the Baltic trade from 1497 to 1548, and from one-third to one-half from 1557 to 1686 (showing a relative loss in the total trade as Calvinism increased in the province, which is the reverse of what would be expected of Holland if the Weber thesis worked), the province of Zeeland, situated to the south of Holland, and therefore farther removed from the Baltic Sea, had to be satisfied with between one and two percent of the total, and often with even less. Was this perhaps because Zeeland did not contain so many energetic Calvinists? No, the Calvinists in Zeeland were stronger proportionately than they were in Holland. The two northern provinces, on the other hand, enjoyed the control of more than fifteen per cent of the Baltic trade, both before they became Calvinistic and afterward. In the eighteenth century, when Calvinism was well-nigh dead in the northern provinces, as far as the majority of the population was concerned, these two provinces gradually gained on Holland, and by 1726 they surpassed it in number of ships they sent to the Baltic Sea.

Furthermore, the leading industries in the Dutch Republic during the period from 1581 to 1700, when orthodox Calvinism was far

[26] A. Fanfani, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism*, p. 168.

stronger in the northern provinces than in Holland, were nevertheless situated for the most part in Holland. It was also Holland which owned most of the shares in the East India Company and the West India Company; and it was Holland that possessed the leading bank and the only stock market. More money was to be found in Holland than in all the other six provinces put together. Nevertheless, Holland could boast of only one university in the republic out of a total of five. Holland after 1611 was not recognized as the leading center of orthodox Calvinist theology. It is true that the international Calvinist synod of Dordrecht (1618-1619) was held in the province of Holland, but its president had come from the extreme north. And between 1636 and 1700 Utrecht surpassed Leyden as a center of orthodox Calvinist theology. Today, Calvinism is weakest in the most thriving hives of Dutch industry, as is not strange at all.

I have always been of the opinion that Dutch fishing and trade were doing very well before there were any Calvinists in the Netherlands. When, for example, in the year 1503, that is, six years before Calvin was born, 718 ships from the province of Holland sailed through the Sound out of a total of 1222, it can hardly be said that Calvinism brought such a decided advantage to Dutch shipping.[27] And when in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, the industrious fishermen in Zeeland developed their world-famous process of curing herring (which was kept a secret for more than two hundred years), no one dreamed then of ascribing this event to a change in religion or theology. The obligation to work hard was in the blood of the Dutch long before Calvin was ever heard of, and the frugality of their middle class was considered a virtue when Thomas a Kempis lived among them and wrote his *Imitation of Christ* (1415-1425).

[27] The figures about the Baltic trade given above are drawn from a very useful work: N. E. Bang, *Tabeller over skibsfart og varetransport gennem Oresund 1497-1660* (Copenhagen and Leipzig, 1906); and the same for 1661-1789, published in 1930. They show that until the war of the American Revolution, the ships of the Dutch Republic kept abreast of the English merchant marine in the Baltic Sea. They explain why Oliver Cromwell said such bitter things about the Dutch in the Sound, as may be seen especially in Speech XVII, in the edition of Thomas Carlyle. It is indeed remarkable that in 1653, when Cromwell's sailors were said to be successful in fighting the Dutch, not a single ship from England sailed through the Sound. It is also remarkable that the province of Zeeland did no better in the years 1673, 1676-1678, 1691,

It may sound very plausible to say that Calvinism, or Puritanism, appealed naturally to the middle class, but we have seen that in the great city of Amsterdam, Calvinism was most successful among the poorest classes of people, while the middle class held aloof from it to a considerable degree. Furthermore, in the northern provinces of the Dutch Republic, where the largest number of Calvinists were to be found in proportion to the total population, very few Catholics remained, while in the cities they possessed flourishing congregations. This is not a remarkable phenomenon, for it was relatively easy to support a priest in a city, and so the communicants had a rallyingpoint around which they could congregate and thus withstand the onslaughts of victorious Calvinism. It would be very simple to ignore this obvious fact, and to conclude that Catholicism naturally appealed to the middle class in the cities. I dare say that many details could be marshaled with which to support this interesting theory, but it would be just as feeble as its exact opposite, namely, the Weber-Troeltsch thesis.

The secular forces which helped to make the Dutch the chief bankers of the seventeenth century and which brought to Amsterdam the largest colony of Jews to be found in any city by the end of the eighteenth century, should have attracted some of the great minds in Europe or America. But it was not until the year 1927 that the first satisfactory economic history of Holland made its appearance.[28] In this work there is a casual reference to the relation between Calvinism and capitalism, and it is so brief that Weber's name is not even mentioned; nor does his name appear in the bibliography which fills twenty-three large pages and is of excellent quality. This is as it should be, for neither Max Weber nor Ernest Troeltsch were familiar with the subject. Would it not seem that to write about the rise of modern capitalism without a thorough study of Dutch history must inevitably have led to distorted ideas? It was only the name of the great expert in sociological studies that gave his false hypothesis the widely accepted hearing and credence it enjoyed for a quarter of a century.

and 1695; when Holland sent respectively, 500, 723, 961, 904, 627, and 701 ships. The highest number attained by Friesland and Groningen (the two northern Dutch provinces) was 1498 in 1740, when Holland sent 1106, and England 718. In 1775, England boasted of 2038, Holland of 982, and Friesland and Groningen of 1422.

[28] E. Baasch, *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Jena, 1927).

Chapter VII

PURITANISM VERSUS CAPITALISM

It has been believed by many admirers of the English people that the Puritans, through their superior qualities, laid the foundations of the British Empire. No one can deny that the English have done very well indeed. The size of their merchant marine since the middle of the seventeenth century, their conquest of the larger portion of North America and of India, their superb banking system and their teeming industries leave no doubt in the mind of any honest thinker that the English surpassed both the Italians and the Dutch. What could then be more simple than to connect England's enormous economic power with the religion of the Puritans? This formula would answer all questions concerning the rise of capitalism in the British Isles, and for a quarter of a century it seemed to a large number of historians as if the Heidelberg school of experts had thus solved the intricate problem.

A few quotations from the Westminster Catechism of 1647 to show how dreadful the doctrine of predestination was, and how it made the Puritans exert all their energy in order to please an inhumane God; a distorted picture of the attempts by Calvin and Beza to turn Geneva in to a huge monastery, with the subsequent repercussions among the English Puritans; [1] and certain passages reproduced from the works of the later Puritans (sometimes forti-

[1] It has been shown by P. A. Diepenhorst, in his book, *Calvijn en de economie* (Wageningen, 1904), p. 234, that the laws against luxury and frivolity were almost identical with those in vogue in many cities in France, Switzerland and the Netherlands. See also E. Doumergue, *l.c.,* III, 423; V, 695. Very illuminating are the more recent comments by Professor A. A. van Schelven in his composition, "Historisch onderzoek naar den levensstijl van het Calvinisme," which appeared in the collection of Calvinist essays, entitled *Christendom en Historie* (Kampen, 1931), pp. 64-94. See especially pp. 73-76.

fied with useful statements by such remarkable persons as John Wesley and Benjamin Franklin) were to make it clear to the reader how Calvinism did for England what it first had done for Holland. It looked so simple and so convincing to the multitude that not until 1933, with the appearance of the helpful book by H. M. Robertson, did any important protest arise in the English-speaking world. Three years later Professor H. J. Laski of the University of London made bold to declare that "Weber and his disciples have committed a grave anachronism in their eagerness to prove a theory." [2]

It was bad enough to discuss the influence of Calvinism upon the rise of modern capitalism without making a thorough study of Dutch Calvinism and Dutch capitalism, but it was even worse to quote from a few Puritan writers of the second half of the seventeenth century in order to show what either Calvinism or Puritanism really was. Nor did the manufacturers of the new school of thought learn to distinguish between Calvinism and Puritanism. They were interested in concocting new ideas, which took few pains to produce. The laborious study of the older official records was never undertaken until but a few years ago, and even today we are in no position to make such positive statements as were made by the Heidelberg school thirty years ago.

Some of the leading Calvinist authorities in Europe have indicated that the doctrine of predestination played a much smaller role in the Calvinist churches than is commonly believed, and that those who are interested in the history of Puritanism should remember that there is not a word to be found about predestination in the first edition of Calvin's masterpiece, *The Institute of the Christian Religion,* and only a fleeting reference to it in the Geneva Catechism of the year 1545.[3] Moreover, the alleged connection between hard work and the assurance of being one of the precious elect exists for the most part only in the realm of fancy, according to the same Calvinist authorities. In the preceding chapter we have seen that the latter theory cannot be proved as far as Dutch Calvinism is concerned.

A Calvinist pastor in this country has made the following obser-

[2] *The Rise of European Liberalism* (London, 1936), p. 34.
[3] A. A. van Schelven, *l.c.,* p. 73.

vation: "Many historians regard the Puritans as Calvinists, and, in general, they appear to be somewhat justified in doing so. For the Puritans in history were apparently inclined more toward the Calvinist theology than toward any other. In this sense the Puritans in England were Calvinists just as well as the Huguenots in France. . . . However, the term 'Puritan' so used is confined to one particular age. But Puritanism understood as a religious phenomenon cannot be limited to one particular age, nor even to the English people. It began before there were Puritans, and it extends even to the present time. . . . The Puritan spirit has always been religiously and ethically non-Calvinistic. The Puritans, as far as they concerned themselves with theological questions, regarded themselves for the most part as Calvinists and did not wish to be anything else. Yet due to the English character and to the circumstances under which Puritanism arose, there crept into Puritanism many deviations from Calvinism." [4]

The same writer points out that a large number of scholars have used the term "Puritanism" as synonomous with the Reformation or with Protestantism. Others consider it a second Reformation. "Some hold all non-conformists to have been Puritans, while others are determined to call no one outside the English Church a Puritan. For many Puritanism is an ecclesiastic term. Others limit its ecclesiastic sense and apply it only to Presbyterianism. At one period in English history all those who opposed the king became known as Puritans; these were the political Puritans. Besides these there were ceremonial Puritans, doctrinal Puritans, and what we may call ethical Puritans." [5]

Protestantism was slow to spread in England, the first phase being a break with the Pope begun by King Henry VIII. The dissolution of the monasteries and of the whole principle of monasticism, together with the refusal of the Tudor monarchs (except Queen Mary, 1553-1558) to recognize the bishop of Rome any longer as the head of the Church, prepared the way for the real Reformation in England. The difference between the Reformation in England and the

[4] R. Bronkema, *The Essence of Puritanism* (Goes, 1929), p. 2. The author refers here to H. Heppe, *Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformirten Kirche* (Leyden, 1879), pp. 1-21.

[5] R. Bronkema, *l.c.*, p. 13.

Reformation in the Netherlands may be noted under the following points: (1) Protestantism in England was largely directed from the top down to the level of the masses. Whatever the monarch wished to inaugurate was generally instituted. Henry VIII wished for no doctrinal changes, with the result that only those alterations of an ecclesiastical and political nature favored by him were put through in his reign. Under his son, Edward VI (1547-1553), and under his younger daughter, Elizabeth (1558-1603), a similar process took place. On the other hand, the various Protestant movements in the Netherlands were all of a popular nature until Calvinism had finally triumphed, and the government made the Reformed Church the state church. (2) The Anabaptists, who were so numerous in the Netherlands between 1530 and 1560, made very few converts in England during the sixteenth century. After 1600, however, the English Baptists developed a denomination of their own in the Dutch Republic.[6] (3) The Calvinists in England were very influential in altering the theology of the Church of England, but unlike their brethren in Scotland and the Dutch Republic, they were unable to obtain governmental support in building a state church. (4) The majority of the Protestants in England between 1550 and 1660 did not produce a well-defined system of political and religious thought, in which respect they were less fortunate than the Dutch Calvinists.[7]

One of the most influential missionaries of continental Protestantism in England during the reign of Edward VI was Martin Butzer (Bucer), whom we have discussed in Chapter V. He was befriended by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had succeeded the ill-fated Thomas Wolsey; and the kindly archbishop secured for him a chair of theology in the University of Cambridge, where he

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[6] C. Burrage, *The English Dissenters,* Vol. I (Cambridge, 1912), p. 121.

[7] On the rise of Protestantism in England see J. Gairdner, *History of the Church of England* (London, 1904); R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England from the Abolition of the Roman Jurisdiction,* 6 Vols. (London, 1883-1902), covering the period from 1520 to 1570; J. Clayton, *The Protestant Reformation in Great Britain* (London, 1934); A. C. Deane, *The Life of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1927); S. Carter, *The English Church and the Reformation* (London, 1925); F. A. Gasquet, *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries* (London, 1889-1890); S. B. Liljegren, *The Fall of the Monasteries and the Social Changes in England leading to the Great Revolution* (London, 1924); A. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation* (London, 1926).

spent the last year of his life (1550-1551), and where he composed a remarkable work, *Of the Kingdom of Christ* (1550). Although the book was not published until 1557, it made a deep impression upon the king, who used it as a source for his own composition, *Discourse on the Reformation of Abuses.* Afterward it was translated into French and German.[8]

The influence of the Calvinist regents on the young king may be seen in the passing of a statute dealing with the lending of money on interest. Henry VIII had been largely responsible for the statute of 1545, which stated that rates of interest on loans were permitted up to ten per cent.[9] It was a recognition of conditions prevailing in various European countries, as was indicated by Luther and Calvin, as well as by numerous Catholic scholars. Luther had complained about the attitude of Charles V, who had permitted the lending of money at twelve per cent, as we saw, in his native country (the Netherlands), and it was natural that the English king, whose relations with Charles were close, would express his attitude in a similar manner.

Inasmuch as the rate of ten per cent was higher than that approved of by Calvin, who thought that five per cent was high enough, we should expect to find signs of protest from the Calvinists in England. These protests were soon produced. Perhaps the most effective was that contained in a sermon preached by Thomas Lever in 1550. He said: "What shall we say then of usury, which is now made so lawful that an officer of the realm if he wanted to, could not punish anyone for it and make him stop practicing it? Concerning this matter we have a plain commandment in Deut. XV, and in Matthew V. And in the sixth chapter of Luke we are enjoined to give without expecting to receive anything back. Here we have two commandments, one not to lend, and one not to lend on interest. Now, he who breaks God's commandment will go to the devil. So in breaking these two commandments, here are two ways in which

[8] H. Eells, *Martin Bucer,* p. 409.

[9] See *Statutes of the Realm,* ed. D. Pickering, Vol. V (Cambridge, 1763), under 37 Henry VIII, c. 9, pp. 225-226. The best edition, however, is that prepared in the reign of George III: *The Statutes of the Realm. Printed by Command of His Majesty King George the Third,* Vol. III, p. 996.

you rich men can go to the devil: either in lending for profit, or else in not lending at all." [10]

Owing to the influence of Robert Crowley and other Calvinists, who may be designated as Puritans, a new statute was passed in 1552, annulling that of 1545, and declaring that no interest was to be charged at all on money lent to anyone: "No person by any means shall lend or forbear any sum of money for any manner of usury or increase to be received or hoped for above the sum lent, upon pain to forfeit the sum lent, and the increase, imprisonment and fine at the king's pleasure." The preamble of the statute throws welcome light on the viewpoint of those men in Parliament who were responsible for its passage. Referring to the statute of 1545, it reads thus: "And yet nevertheless the same [usury] was by the said act permitted, for the avoiding of a more [greater] ill and inconvenience, that before that time was used and exercised. But for as much as usury is by the Word of God utterly prohibited, as a vice most odious and detestable, as in diverse places of the Holy Scripture it is evident to be seen, which thing by no godly teachings and persuasions can sink into the hearts of diverse greedy, uncharitable, and covetous persons of this realm, nor yet by any terrible threatenings of God's wrath, and vengeance that justly hangeth over this realm, for the great and open usury therein daily used and practised, they will forsake such filthy gain and lucre, unless some temporal punishment be provided, and ordained in that behalf." [11]

Robert Crowley was the man who apparently had done the most for arousing the sentiment against usury in England. About the year 1534 he had become a student at Oxford, and in 1549 he set up a printing establishment in London. What he enjoyed most, however, was preaching, hence in 1551 he was ordained deacon by Bishop Ridley. Inasmuch as he fled with other English refugees to the city of Frankfort at the opening of Mary's reign, he showed himself of

[10] Th. Lever, *Sermons. 1550.* See *English Reprints,* ed. E. Arber (London, 1870), pp. 44-45.

[11] *The Statutes of the Realm,* Vol. IV (1819), Part I, p. 155. Another version of this statute, called officially 5 & 6 Edward VI, Ch. 20, is that printed in 1552 by R. Grafton in London under the title of *Anno quinto et sexto Edvvardi Sexti,* fol. XXVIII verso, and XXIX recto. There is a slight difference in spelling and punctuation, and this early copy has "evil" for "yll," where it refers to usury. The government obviously was itself exempt from the terms of the act, and it borrowed money on interest during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, in spite of the statute.

the same faith as the adherents of Calvinism, for the English Church at Frankfort was strongly dominated by the views of Calvin and his immediate followers. What they had to do with the growth of Calvinism in England, we shall see presently.[12]

Crowley published two severe attacks on what was then called usury, the lending of money on interest. The last section of his *Epigrams* (1550) was devoted entirely to usury, and in his petition to Parliament, entitled *An Information and Petition against the Oppressors of this Realm,* he discussed at length the evils of usury. He said that he deplored the sad effects of the act of 1545, which, as we observed, permitted the charging of interest on loans up to ten per cent. "Alas, that ever any Christian assembly should be so void of God's Holy Spirit that they should allow as lawful anything that God's Word forbids. . . . Scan the words of the Psalmist concerning this matter. . . . 'He that has not given his money unto usury.' . . . If you (most Christian counselors) do glory in the knowledge of God's Spirit, who has spoken these words by the prophet, how can you suffer this act to stand, which shall be a witness against you in the last day that you allow that which God's Spirit forbids?

"If he that gives not his money to usury shall dwell in the Lord's tabernacle, where shall he dwell that gives his money to usury? Shall he not be shut out, and cast into utter darkness? . . . Yea, and you that have made this law, unless you do revoke it and establish an act to the contrary, the Bridegroom, the only Son of God, shall at the last day deny you, and say that He never knew you. . . . Scan the words of the Savior also, in Luke VI, where He says, 'Do you lend, looking for no gain thereof, and your reward shall be plenteous.' . . . I am not ignorant what glosses have been made upon this text, how men have wrested it and made it no precept but only a counsel of our Savior; and therefore not to infer that there is necessity for the Christians, but to leave them at liberty either to do or to leave undone.

"Oh merciful Lord, what manner of religion is it that these men possess? They boast themselves to be the disciples of Christ . . . And doubt you not (most worthy counselors), whatsoever he is that will

[12] See *The Select Works of Robert Crowley, Printer, Archdeacon of Hereford (1559-1567), Vicar of St. Lawrence, Jewry, etc.,* ed. J. M. Cowper (London, 1872), pp. IX, X.

defend or teach that any little iota of the counsels of Christ should be so vainly spoken that any of His flock might refuse to practise the same in his life to the uttermost of his power, is no less than a member of the devil, and a very Antichrist .... Wishing unto you (most worthy counselors) the same Spirit that in the primitive church gave unto the multitudes of believers one heart, one mind, and to esteem nothing of this world as their own, ministering unto everyone to his necessities; that you, led by the same Spirit, may at the least ordain such a law that the oppression of the poor shall not freely reign among them that bear the name of Christians." [13]

These admonitions give a clear indication of what would have happened if the rapid growth of trade and industry in England and the Netherlands had not driven the Calvinists out of their untenable position in their attempt to transform the world into a society of Christians, to be ruled by the Word of God. That such men as Martin Butzer, Thomas Lever and Robert Crowley could have aided the development of capitalism seems a bit far-fetched. Quotations from the writings of Puritans who were not yet born when the sixteenth century drew to a close also will aid us little in endeavoring to grasp the cause of the change which occurred in the reign of Edward VI. Let us then examine the circumstances which produced the statute of 1552 and the Protestant ascendancy under the regents, or protectors (Somerset and Warwick), of young King Edward VI.

As early as 1530, Henry VIII had considered an alliance with the Protestant princes in Germany, who at that time were at the point of declaring war upon Emperor Charles V, because of his resolute attitude adopted against the Lutheran faith. In 1535 and 1536 several English agents had been at work in Germany, trying to bring about such an alliance. When in 1538 the king of France (Francis I) and Charles V were being drawn into a warm friendship by Pope Paul II, which seriously threatened the safety of both England and the Lutheran princes in Germany, another attempt was made to arrive at an alliance. Cranmer was deeply interested in this plan, as he favored the continental Protestants. It was for a good reason that Butzer in 1536 dedicated his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans to Cranmer, stating in the lengthy preface that his hope lay in the spread of the Reformation into England. In 1538

[13] *Works*, pp. 172-175.

delegates arrived from Germany to confer with the English government, and it is likely that Cranmer presided over the meetings held by the German Protestants and the English bishops. The German Protestants, however, insisted on greater ecclesiastical and doctrinal changes than the English bishops were willing to grant.[14]

Gradually Cranmer came to the conclusion that not the Lutheran, but the Zwinglian, or Calvinist, faith was preferable to his colleagues. In Zurich labored Bullinger and several other capable theologians (such as Lavater and Gesner), who during the reign of Queen Mary entertained over two hundred English refugees. Calvin and Melanchthon also made a favorable impression upon the Archbishop of Canterbury. On July 4, 1548, Cranmer wrote a letter to John a Lasco, a stout Calvinist, who was to be one of the first to bring the new breath of Calvinism to England. Cranmer wrote thus: "We are desirous of setting forth in our churches the true doctrine of God, and have no wish to adapt it to all tastes, or to deal in ambiguities; but, laying aside all carnal considerations, to transmit to posterity a true and explicit form of doctrine agreeable to the rule of sacred writings; so that there may not only be set forth among all nations an illustrious testimony respecting our doctrines delivered by the grave authority of learned and godly men, but that all posterity may have a pattern to imitate. For the purpose of carrying this important design into execution, we have thought it necessary to have the assistance of learned men, who, having compared their opinions together with ours, may do away with all doctrinal controversies and build up an entire system of true doctrine. We have therefore invited both yourself and some other learned men; and as they have come over to us without any reluctance, so that we scarcely have to regret the absence of any of them, with the exception of yourself and Melanchthon, we earnestly request you both to come yourself and to bring Melanchthon with you." [15]

There is no doubt that Melanchthon's conciliatory views strongly appealed to the scholarly archbishop in England. He, who saw so much that was good in the Roman Catholic Church, and who hoped

[14] A. F. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer,* p. 115.

[15] *Zurich letters,* Vol. III, that is, *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation, Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich,* First Portion (Cambridge, 1846), p. 17.

that the Protestants might sit with the Catholics at the Council of Trent, was willing to concede much to either the Calvinists or the Catholics. It is not, therefore, surprising that the works of Melanchthon were published in the *Corpus Reformatorum* together with those of Calvin and Zwingli. Nor is it strange that King Edward VI appealed to Melanchthon for advice. J. Strype, in his *Ecclesiastical Memorials,* throws welcome light on the influence exerted by Melanchthon in England. In his comments on the year 1548 he writes thus: "The great learned German divine, Philip Melanchthon, addressed King Edward a letter dated the 13th of January, which one Francis Dryander, a learned Protestant, brought and presented, who fled hither, as many other professors of religion out of foreign parts had done, for avoiding the persecution which the Interim had occasioned. By this letter it appeared that great consultations were now held here at home by the king and some of his learned divines, not only concerning the reformation of this Church, but also of the other foreign ones, in Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy and Spain; and for the uniting them together in one uniform doctrine; a matter thought fit for the royal breast. Wherein the Archbishop of Canterbury was the great mover. Melanchthon in his letter commended the King for this and he told him, that he followed his royal father's example, whom he styled *sapientissimum regem,* a very wise king. . . . To these letters of foreign learned men the King paid a great deference, and they had a great influence with him." [16]

Another passage from Strype will show how the English welcomed the foreign theologians: "The King was beforehand with Melanchthon in these notions, and had provided the two universities of the land with two learned foreigners, Peter Martyr to read divinity at Oxford and Martin Bucer at Cambridge, both coming from Strasburgh, but Martyr first. These grave and learned Doctors were placed there, the Lord Protector and the Archbishop judging them the fittest persons to inform the students in their notions and doctrines concerning religion. . . . In divinity they took the Holy Scriptures for their guide, and gathered their tenets from no other authority but thence, according to the constant principle of that great and good Archbishop." [17]

[16] J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (Oxford, 1822), p. 188.
[17] J. Strype, *l.c.,* p. 189.

The progress of the reformers under Edward may be judged from a letter written by John Hooper to Henry Bullinger in Zurich: "Now as to what is doing in England. The bishops of Canterbury, Rochester, Ely, St. David's, Lincoln and Bath are all favorable to the cause of Christ, and as far as I know entertain right opinions in the matter of the eucharist. I have freely conversed with all of them upon this subject and have found nothing but what is pure and holy. . . . Our king is such an one for his age as the world has never seen. May the Lord preserve him! His sister, the daughter of the late king by Queen Anne, is inflamed with the same zeal for the religion of Christ. She only knows what the true religion is, but has acquired such proficiency in Greek and Latin that she is able to defend it by the most just arguments and the most happy talent; so that she encounters few adversaries whom she does not overcome. The people, however, that many-headed monster, is still wincing, partly through ignorance, and partly fascinated by the inveiglements of the bishops, and the malice and impiety of the mass priests." [18]

Archbishop Cranmer was happy to report to Melanchthon in a letter dated Feb. 10, 1549, that many learned men had come to aid him in his task of reforming the Church of England: "For many pious and learned men have come over to us, some from Italy, some from Germany; and we are daily expecting more: which society of the Church if you will vouchsafe to increase and adorn with your presence, I know not by what means you will be able more effectually to set forth the glory of God." [19]

Cranmer had to be satisfied, however, with the services of Butzer and Martyr. The latter, after having been for some years a Lutheran, turned more and more in the direction of Calvinism, as happened to a large number of scholars in Switzerland, western Germany and the Netherlands. Whereas up to 1549, Cranmer had been hesitant to adopt any radical changes in rites and doctrines, the parliamentary debates in January, 1549, brought great pleasure to "the disciples of Zurich and Geneva." Cranmer had not yet accepted the so-called "sacramentarian view," which considered the ritual of the Communion service as little more than symbolical and commemorative. "But the influence of such men as Peter Martyr was increasing. . . .

[18] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. III, p. 76. The letter was dated February 5, 1550.
[19] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. III, p. 21.

His appointment to the Chair of Divinity at Oxford led to the open and public debating of such high mysteries as the Sacrament of the Altar in a style which tended to a painful irreverence." [20]

Thus it happened naturally that, when at the end of Edward's reign, the well-known Forty-Two Articles of the Church of England were drawn up under the supervision of Cranmer, the Calvinist doctrines of the eucharist, of free will and predestination, and of the sovereignty of God were incorporated into the official creed of the Anglican Church. When under Queen Elizabeth the articles were reduced to thirty-nine, no fundamental change was made in the creed.

The article which deals with free will runs thus: "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will." On works performed before justification, the creed says: "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasant to God." Predestination is defined thus, even in the American Revised Version of 1801: "Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind."

There were, it is true, theologians in the seventeenth century who claimed that this definition of the doctrine of predestination savored still too much of the teachings of the Roman church, but the average layman could not tell the difference. God had chosen certain persons out of the mass of mankind for the purpose of offering them faith, a good will and justification through the atonement of Christ. Here was election for those who wanted to see it, for God's choice was made before the foundation of the world, and nothing was said about God's knowing in advance how many would wish to accept Christ of their own will. As a matter of fact, enough was said to show that man could not of his own will generate the saving faith. Why, then, should anyone wish to draw a hard and fast line of

[20] A. D. Innes, *Cranmer* (New York, 1900), p. 131.

demarcation between the members of the Anglican Church who were satisfied with the Prayer-Book and with episcopacy, and those who wanted to abolish both, as if the first rejected predestination (since they were not called Puritans) and the second accepted it (being classified as Puritans, because of their opposition to the Prayer-Book and episcopacy)? A person was not called a Puritan because he favored the most extreme Calvinist doctrine of predestination, but because he wanted to "purify" the government and rites of the Church of England. A Puritan objected as a rule to the Prayer-Book, because the Roman Church had one; he opposed episcopacy for the same reason; and he wanted to abolish some of the decorations in the churches, because he looked upon them as idolatry. The Puritan of the sixteenth century was not disturbed about the way predestination was defined in the Church of England.

Although the question of episcopacy did not stir the leading Protestants of the sixteenth century to any marked degree, we know that a distinctive feature of English and American Puritanism was the objection to the institution of bishops. It is, therefore, somewhat difficult to determine who were the Puritans of the period before the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558. Many historians are in fact of the opinion that there were no Puritans before 1558. Another difficulty confronting us is the use of the word "Calvinist" when referring to the English Protestants before 1558. A typical Calvinist opposed episcopacy, the use of the Prayer-Book and altars, and the elaborate ceremonies and decorations which characterized the services in the Church of England. Consequently, when discussing only economic questions, we must nevertheless remember these religious and ecclesiastical points, and we ought to be careful with the use of the terms "Puritans" and "Calvinists."

One of the best-known "Puritans" of the inceptive period is John Hooper, a warm friend of Cranmer, who in a letter of March 20, 1552, addressed to Bullinger, tells the Swiss reformer that at the present time Hooper is staying at his house. He has done so well as bishop of Gloucester that now he has been appointed bishop of Worcester.[21] Hooper, although a bishop, was not addicted to the

[21] *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr 1556,* ed. J. E. Cox, (Cambridge, 1846), pp. 430-431.

love of pomp and ceremony. He was nearly a typical Puritan, and he wrote thus about riches and honors in this world: "The magistrates that suffer the abuse of these goods, be culpable of the fault. If the fourth part of the bishopric remained unto the bishops, it were sufficient." Of ministers in general he wrote: "They should be reasonably provided for, and the rest and overplus taken from them." [22]

Hooper's views on avarice and usury are expressed thus: "Thefts are all fraud and guile in buying or selling, and breaking of promise, in all bargains and contracts. . . . Of this avarice comes usury, fraud, false contracts. . . . As for usury, and the applying of money or anything else to an unreasonable gain, it is none other than theft. I would men should rather refrain from the giving of money to a gain altogether, than break the law of charity, that helps without looking for gain, Luke VI, Lev. XIX, and also Exod. XXII, Deut. XXIII; because usury is plain forbidden. The laws and constitutions of the magistrates civil admit certain gain and usury, as you read, Cod. Lib. IV, Tit. 32: though they be in many things scarcely to be borne withal, yet I would they were well observed; but such is our time that every man is in this case a law to himself and takes what he can." [23]

On riches in general, Hooper's view is this: "Therefore the prophet says, 'Although riches do abound, yet men should not put their hearts upon them:' that is to say, men should not trust in them, nor keep them otherwise than their use or keeping should serve to the glory of God." [24]

Similar are the opinions of Roger Hutchinson, one of the most intimate friends of Thomas Lever. He studied at Cambridge with Lever and several others of the early Puritans; became a fellow there, and afterward a fellow at Eton. His viewpoint, therefore, does not necessarily represent that of the oppressed and lowly classes. He said: "Rich men are to be pitied. Christ tells us that they have hard access to heaven. . . . Why do we grudge that they have plenty

[22] *Early Writings of John Hooper, Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, Martyr 1555*, ed. the Rev. S. Carr (Cambridge, 1843), pp. 396-398.

[23] *Early Writ.*, p. 393.

[24] *Later Writings of Bishop Hooper*, ed. the Rev. Ch. Nevinson (Cambridge, 1852), p. 281.

of thorns which molest, and prick and lead them to eternal death?" [25]

Thomas Lever also had much to say about the dangers inherent in the possession of great wealth. In his sermons preached in 1550, he reveals more interest in social and economic questions than in holy living. One might almost confuse him with a modern socialist, and I must say that his tone differs considerably from that of John Calvin, who devoted far less attention to what may be termed social justice. Although he refuted the arguments of the Anabaptists who had argued that all men should possess all goods in common, nevertheless, he said this, "Rich men should keep to themselves no more than they need, and give to the poor as much as they need." In this way, he added, should one interpret the passage in the Acts of the Apostles, Ch. IV, about all Christians possessing their goods in common.[26]

In his sermon preached before King Edward VI, he spoke as follows: "He that seeks to be rich, be he never so poor a slave, or so mighty a lord, he will fall into diverse temptations and snares of the devil; but they that seek the Lord, shall lack no goodness. Seek to be rich, and you shall find sorrow, misery, and mischief; seek to be godly, and you shall find comfort, wealth and prosperity, with all manner of felicity. If you will be godly, you must follow Christ." [27] Very true, but in the rest of the sermon the auditor hears very little about how he is to imitate Christ. There is repeated reference to the social evils, high rents to be paid by the poor tenants in the country; high prices for food supplies; fat benefices for the bishops; enclosures of cultivable fields, to be combined with others into pasture lands, thus throwing additional people out of work in the country; fraud in business dealings; immense sums of money diverted from the dissolved monasteries and benefices into the hands of rich nobles; and magnificent buildings reserved for the rich, while the humble dwellings of the poor are allowed to decay. In short, the rich are getting richer and the poor, poorer.

In another sermon, Lever continued in the same vein, speaking

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[25] *The Works of Roger Hutchinson*, ed. J. Bruce (Cambridge, 1852), pp. 296-297.

[26] *A Sermon made in the Shroudes in Poules*, in *English Reprints*, ed. E. Arber (London, 1870), p. 27.

[27] *A Sermon preached before the Kyng*, in *Reprints*, p. 63.

almost continually about Mammon-worship: "The rich man by liberality must dispose relief and comfort to the poor. The merchant by buying and selling, and the craftsman by his occupation, must provide unto the commonwealth the necessary wares and sufficient supplies for all. The landlord, by leasing lands at a moderate price must furnish fields to the tenants, and also homes at low rates of rent. The husbandmen [peasants] must till the soil with proper diligence, and so produce the necessary crops, rents and provisions for himself and the community at large." [28] Lever is especially interested in helping check the evil of forestalling, monopolies, getting "a corner" in wheat or other food supplies, and fraudulent practices such as had been exposed by Luther in Germany. "Take heed," he exclaimed, "you merchants of London, that you be not merchants of mischief, removing from the country too much old lead, wool, leather and such other substantial wares that will give employment to many workmen, while in their place you import silks, sables and foolish feathers that fill the country with useless baggage, of no practical advantage to either rich or poor." [29]

I find that Hugh Latimer, who was for a time bishop of Worcester, and became one of the first martyrs under Queen Mary in 1555, expressed the same views on wealth as did his friends. "For some there are," he argued, "that have no rest, but still study and muse how they may get riches and honours. . . . Seek not for it; for it is the greatest madness that may be, to seek for honours or riches." [30] In several places he remarks that riches are harmful to the Christian, but they must neither be condemned in themselves, nor worshiped.[31] Such were the comments about worldly riches of the men who laid the foundations of Puritanism in England. How they were assisted by the brethren of the faith from abroad, we shall now see.

Among the foreigners employed by Cranmer in developing the creed of the Anglican Church, we have met Butzer and Martyr. Others included Ochino, who came to Oxford in 1547; Fagius, who

[28] *A Sermon preached at Paules Cross,* in *Reprints,* p. 106.

[29] *Reprints,* p. 131.

[30] *Sermons and Remains of Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555,* ed. the Rev. G. E. Corrie, Vol. II, Parker Society, Vol. XXVIII (Cambridge, 1845), p. 214.

[31] *Sermons,* Vol. I (1844 ed.), pp. 277, 280, 303, 442, 470; Vol. II, p. 300.

arrived in 1549; and A Lasco, who took up residence in London in the same year.[32] Rodolph Gualter, one of the Pastors at Zurich, must have been influential also, for he wrote to Lord Francis Russell in 1559, "I should deservedly be deemed ungrateful if in this general rejoicing I alone were to be silent, who far many reasons acknowledge myself deeply indebted to England. For to say nothing of the incredible kindness which I formerly experienced in your country, and the personal favors that I there received, the public cause of the church of Christ most justly demands it of me." [33]

On March 20, 1552, Cranmer sent two letters to Switzerland, one to Calvin at Geneva, the other to Bullinger at Zurich. In both letters he proposed that the Protestants hold a church council, similar to that recently convoked by the Roman Catholics at Trent. Seven days later, he dispatched an epistle to Melanchthon, in which he broached the same subject. Thus it may be surmised that the Forty-two Articles of the Anglican Church, as well as the law against the lending of money on interest, were largely the result of the influence exerted by foreign theologians who sided with Calvin and Melanchthon.[34]

John Hooper throws welcome light on this rather obscure subject in a letter dated at Antwerp, April 26, 1549, and written to Bullinger at Zurich: "I hear that East Friesland has received the Interim. If this be the case, master à Lasco will soon return into England. I greatly regret his absence, especially as Peter Martyr and Bernardine (Ochino) so stoutly defend Lutheranism, and there is now arrived a third, I mean Bucer, who will leave no stone unturned to obtain a footing. The people of England, as I hear, all of them entertain right notions upon that subject." [35] A Lasco was a

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[32] G. P. Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine* (New York, 1908), pp. 310-315; A. A. van Schelven, *De Nederduitsche vluchtelingkerken der 16e eeuw in Engeland en Duitschland in hunne beteekenis voor de Reformatie in de Nederlanden* (The Hague, 1908), p. 59; K. Benrath, *Bernardino Ochino of Sienas. A Contribution towards the History of the Reformation,* tr. from the German by H. Zimmern (London, 1876), pp. 183-216.

[33] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. II, ed. Rev. H. Robinson (Cambridge, 1844), pp. 8-9.

[34] *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer,* pp. 430-434.

[35] *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation,* First Portion, or, *Zurich Letters,* Vol. I (Cambridge, 1846), p. 61.

Calvinist, and Hooper needed him in trying to gain royal and popular support in England for the Calvinist faith.[36]

Hooper was right. The Catholics and Lutherans in Germany did not allow the Calvinists freedom of worship, and, as Hooper had intimated, A Lasco returned to England from Emden in East Friesland. He removed to London, where he was appointed by King Edward VI the superintendent of the German Refugee Church. The king gave the exiles a valuable plot of ground in the heart of London, together with one of the buildings of the former monastery called Austin Friars, which in the original document is called the Church of our Lord Jesus. Edward also stated that there were to be four ministers under A Lasco.[37] Since most of the "pilgrims" were from the Netherlands, a confession of faith and a catechism were drawn up in the Dutch language. The latter was printed in London by Steven Myerdman (1551), while the former appeared at Emden in 1565.[38] The Dutch catechism was prepared by John Utenhove, a disciple of Calvin, who in an admirable preface explained how this church in London enjoyed a greater purity of gospel preaching than had ever been known in the Netherlands. Little did he know then that for nearly four hundred years the Dutch congregation was to worship there on the same spot.[39]

Calvinist influence is seen also in the work of John Hooper, who according to one of America's greatest church historians (Philip Schaff), was the father of Puritanism. He spent two years in Zurich, and in 1551 he was appointed bishop of Gloucester. His attitude toward the matter of ceremonies and vestments in the Church came to light when he refused at first to take the episcopal oath and

[36] A. Kuyper, *J. Calvini et Joannis a Lasco de ecclesia sententiarum inter se composito* (Amsterdam, 1862).

[37] See *Joannis a Lasco Opera tam edita quam inedita,* ed. A. Kuyper, Vol. II (Amsterdam, The Hague, 1866), pp. 279-283. The charter was dated July 24, 1550. See also *Rot. Pat. Ed. VI,* Part 5. A summary in English is to be found in *Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Edward VI,* Vol. III (London, 1925), p. 317.

[38] Reproduced in the *Opera,* Vol. II, pp. 293-475.

[39] See also H. Dalton, *Johannes a Lasco,* tr. P. C. van Oosterzee (Utrecht, 1880), p. 380; W. J. C. Moens, *The Walloons and their Church at Norwich* (Lymington, 1887), p. 47. Moens indicates that at the end of 1550 it was agreed that in the Austin Friars Church the Dutch language was henceforth to be used. In a letter, dated March 12, 1549, we read that there are 5,000 members in the "German" church, thus indicating the preponderance of the Calvinist element in the city of London at that time. See *Zurich Letters,* III, p. 337.

to wear the surplice at his inauguration. Although even Butzer and Martyr reasoned that the question of vestments was of no importance, he continued in his efforts to simplify the ritual of the Church. His attempts in this direction went so far for the time in which he lived that Calvin himself was moved to write thus: "While, therefore, I admire his firmness in refusing the anointing, I had rather he had not carried his opposition so far with respect to the cap and the linen vestment, even though I do not approve of these: I recently recommended this." [40]

Still more radical was the viewpoint of John Knox, who favored the abolition of episcopacy, and who, according to one of his biographers, may be considered as "the Father and Founder of English as well as Scottish Puritanism." [41] It is indeed true that Knox, when living as an exile at Frankfort, trained a number of men who were destined to play an important role in the growth of Puritanism in England; such as Cartwright, Travers, Frith and Wilcox. Calvin followed with interest the establishment of the English church at Frankfort. In 1555 he addressed a letter to this church in which he said: "Though in unimportant matters, such as external rites, I show myself indulgent and pliable, at the same time I do not deem it expedient always to comply with the foolish captiousness of those who will not give up a single point of their usual routine. In the Anglican ritual, such as you describe it to me, I see that there were many silly things that might be tolerated. By this I mean that it did not possess the purity that was to be desired. The faults, however, which could not immediately be corrected, if there lurked under them no manifest impiety, were to be endured for a time. Thus it was lawful to begin with such rudiments, but still so that it might be proper for learned, grave and virtuous ministers of Christ to proceed farther, and prune away unsightly excrescences, and aim at something purer." [42]

During the reign of Queen Mary, many of the English Protestants lived abroad, where they became increasingly radical. Furthermore, the persecutions of the Protestants in England rendered most of

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[40] The letter is dated March 12, 1551, and is addressed to Bullinger in Zurich. See *Corpus Reformatorum,* Vol. XLII, col. 76-77 (extract).

[41] P. Lorimer, *John Knox and the Church of England* (London, 1875), pp. 219-224.

[42] J. Calvin, *Opera,* Vol. XV, in *CR,* Vol. XLIII, col. 393-394.

the survivors more hostile to the ceremonies retained in the Roman Catholic Church in England. This fact was well expressed by the brilliant Macauley, who in the first volume of his famous *History of England* wrote thus: "Violence naturally engenders violence. The spirit of Protestantism was therefore far fiercer and more intolerant after the cruelties of Mary than before them. Many persons who were warmly attached to the new opinions, had, during the evil days, taken refuge in Switzerland and Germany. They had been hospitably received by their brethren in the faith, had sat at the feet of the great doctors of Strasburg, Zurich and Geneva, and had been, during some years, accustomed to a more simple worship and a more democratical form of church government than England had yet seen. These men returned to their country convinced that the reform which had been effected under King Edward had been far less searching and extensive, than the interest of pure religion required." [43]

One of the most important writers and preachers among the English Protestants, as we saw, was Thomas Lever, who in a letter addressed on August 8, 1559, made a report to Bullinger at Zurich about developments in the Church of England during the reign of Mary: "For there had been a congregation of faithful persons concealed in London during the time of Mary, among whom the Gospel was always preached, with the pure administration of the sacraments; but during the rigor of the persecution under that queen they carefully concealed themselves, and on the cessation of it under Elizabeth they openly continued in the same congregation. . . . And now is popery at length abolished by the authority of parliament, and the true religion of Christ restored; this unclean world, both in the one and in the other seeks after nothing but base and filthy pleasure. Very many persons are so drawn over from that to this that they are neither willing to purify the dross of the one, nor to embrace the purity of the other, but are disposed to frame themselves after the fashion of the world. For there are many who love, possess, and ostentatiously glory in the monuments of superstition, the emoluments of lucre, the liberty, yea, even the pleasures of

[43] G. Macauley, *l.c.*, pp. 45-46.

the flesh, to the great scandal and disgrace of the religion they profess." [44]

As for Elizabeth, she remained attached to the ceremonies of the old church. In her chapel she had an altar lighted with candles and a crucifix, and until the end of her life she objected to all preaching and controversy on the subject of the presence of Christ in the elements of the eucharist. However, when the Forty-Two Articles of the Church of England were altered in her reign to become the Thirty-Nine Articles, the passage which rejected transubstantiation was only slightly revised. A letter from Edwin Sandys to Bullinger, dated December 20, 1558, indicates that Elizabeth promised her sister Mary no more than that she would make no changes in religion, "provided only it can be proved by the Word of God, which shall be the only foundation and rule of my religion." [45] In the same letter we learn that the new queen "changed almost all her counselors, and has taken good Christians into her service in the room of the papists; and there is hope of her promoting the Gospel and advancing the kingdom of Christ to the utmost of her power."

Elizabeth was very slow to permit innovations in the ritual, as was clearly perceived by the Puritans from the beginning. Thus we find John Jewel writing to Peter Martyr, saying that she "is wonderfully afraid of allowing any innovations; this is partly owing to her own friends, by whose advice everything is carried on, and partly to the influence of Count Feria, a Spaniard and Philip's ambassador." [46] While in the House of Commons there was now a majority held by the Protestants, the House of Lords remained for the most part Roman Catholic. The latter, however, were unable to stop the Protestants in the lower house from carrying through the measures upon which they and the queen agreed.

The aims of the leading Protestants during the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign may be seen clearly reflected in an important letter written by Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson to Bullinger in July, 1566: "You will understand then, reverend father, in a few words that these things are our principal object: the authority of the Scriptures, the simplicity of the ministry of Christ, and the

[44] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. II, p. 29.
[45] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. I, p. 3.
[46] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. I, p. 10. The letter is dated March 20, 1559.

purity of the earliest churches, which for the sake of brevity we refrain from mentioning. . . . Besides, we are of the opinion that not whatever may be in any way lawful, should be obtruded, but what in every way tends to the edification of the church should be introduced; and that what may be lawful for some may not be lawful for all. We have a doctrine pure and incorrupt: why should we go halting in regard to divine worship? Why should we receive Christ rather maimed, than entire and pure and perfect? Why should we look for precedents from our enemies, the papists, and not from you, our brethren of the Reformation? We have the same confession in our churches, the same rule of doctrine and faith; why should there be so great a dissimilarity and discrepancy in rites and ceremonies? The thing signified is the same; why do the signs so differ as to be unlike yours, and to resemble those of the papists? We have the same captain and leader, Christ; why are the banners of the enemy set up in our churches? These, if we were men of God, if we were endued with any zeal, we should long since have abominated and destroyed. We have always thought well of the bishops; we have put a candid interpretation upon their display of grandeur; why cannot they endure us who formerly bore the same cross with them? . . . Why do they cast us into prisons? Why do they persecute us on account of habits [clothes]? Why do they spoil us of our property and means of subsistence? Why do they publicly traduce us in their books? Why do they in their published writings commend a bad cause to posterity? For they have translated into our language some papers of Bucer and Peter Martyr, without our knowledge and consent." [47]

The two writers in the same letter presented a list of what they considered the blemishes remaining in the Church of England. These were: (1) A kind of popish superstition in public prayers. (2) The exquisite singing and the use of organs. (3) In the administration of baptism the minister addresses the infant and makes the sign of the cross. (4) Women receive license to baptize children in private houses. (5) The sacred garments, namely, the cope and surplice, are used at the Lord's Supper; kneeling is enjoined, and an unleavened cake is substituted for the common bread. (6) The popish habits are ordered to be worn outside of the church build-

[47] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. I, pp. 161-162.

ings. (7) There is no discipline, neither has the church its rod, or any exercise of superintendence. (8) The marriage of the clergy is not allowed and sanctioned by the public laws of the kingdom, and their children are by some persons considered illegitimate. (9) Solemn betrothing takes place after the popish method and rites, by the giving of a ring. (10) Women continue to wear a veil when they come to be admitted to membership in the church. (11) In the government of the church there are retained many traces of antichrist, including the sale of dispensations, as in the court of the Pope. (12) The free liberty of preaching is taken away from the ministers of Christ. Those who are now willing to preach, are forbidden to recommend any innovation with regard to rites; but all are obliged to give their assent to ceremonies. (13) The article in the creed dating from the reign of Edward respecting the spiritual eating, which expressly impugned and took away the real presence of Christ's body in the sacrament of Communion, is now set forth mutilated and imperfect.

This last point concerning the eucharist, was considered frequently among the early Protestants. Queen Elizabeth, as we saw, did not believe that Christ's body in a physical sense was entirely absent, although thereby she did not necessarily accept the doctrine of transubstantiation. Her view approximated that of the Lutherans. Let us examine briefly, then, what constitutes the change made in this point by the English government in the official creed of the state church. The version of 1552 does indeed contain a clause which is absent from that of 1563. In this clause the believer is told that, inasmuch as Christ's body cannot simultaneously be present in a great many places, it is not present in the eucharist. The Thirty-Nine Articles say that Christ's body is eaten spiritually, hence there is no fundamental difference between the two versions.[48]

And as for the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, that was so well maintained in England during the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign that Bishop Grindal was moved to write to Conrad Hubert at Strasburg, complaining about the way the Protestants in that city objected to Butzer's interpretation, which was almost identical with that of Calvin or with that of the Anglicans. "It is astonishing," he wrote, that they are raising such commotions about predestina-

[48] See E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche*, p. 516.

tion. They should at least consult their own Luther on the *Bondage of the Will.* For what else do Bucer, Calvin and Martyr teach that Luther has not maintained in that treatise? Unless perhaps, they wish to take refuge in some recantation of Luther, whom they all but regard as a god." [49]

We may conclude from this survey of events from 1547 to 1567 that early Puritanism was characterized by emphasis upon rites and ceremonies, while Calvinism emphasized doctrine more than externals. But before long the Calvinists and the Puritans agreed that episcopacy and the prayer-book ought to be removed wherever possible, and that simplicity in rites and ceremonies was required. Calvin's view was supported throughout by the Calvinists, though not always by the Puritans: "These things also are not such as are, in their own nature idolatrous; we do judge that they ought to be dealt with, as we have advised in the things going next before." Calvin refers here to the use of the surplice.[50]

How well Calvin himself perceived the difference between Calvinism and Puritanism, may be seen in a letter he addressed in 1561 to John Knox, who, though a full-fledged Calvinist, attempted to combine Puritanism with Calvinism, and concentrate heavily upon externals: "With regard to ceremonies, I trust, even should you displease many, that you will moderate your rigor. Of course it is your duty to see that the Church be purged of all defilements which flow from error and superstition. For it behooves us to strive sedulously that the mysteries of God be not polluted by the admixture of ludicrous and disgusting rites. But with this exception, you are well aware that certain things should be tolerated even if you do not quite approve of them." Knox remained a Calvinist, and it would not be correct to classify him with the Puritans.[51]

It appears that the term "Puritan" was first used in 1564 to designate a person within the Church of England who was desirous of introducing greater purity in ceremonies, discipline, or doctrine.[52]

At the end of the first period of Puritanism in England (1567),

[49] *Zurich Letters,* Vol. II, pp. 72-73. The letter is dated June 6, 1562.

[50] R. Bronkema, *l.c.,* pp. 39-40.

[51] R. Bronkema, *l.c.,* p. 40.

[52] Ch. Hodge, *The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia, 1839), Vol. I, p. 23.

the Calvinist pastors at Geneva sent a letter to the English brethren in the faith, in which they explained their view concerning the importance of ceremonies. They spoke in exactly the same vein as Calvin had done six years earlier: "First, therefore, we answer that, albeit these things, as we judge, are not rightly restored to their possession in the congregations; yet, seeing that they are not of those kinds of things which are of their own nature impious and ungodly, they seem to us not to be of such weight that the shepherds should rather give over their functions than receive the apparel." [53]

But presently the second stage of Puritanism made its appearance, when the leaders were no longer satisfied with their attack upon the ceremonies in the Church of England, and wanted to alter also the government of the church. In 1572 the first congregation with presbyters (elders) was organized at Wandsworth, thus signifying that episcopacy must go. The question of doctrine was not considered at all, which may not seem surprising since the creed of the Anglican Church resembled so closely that of the Calvinist churches on the Continent. Nevertheless, the lack of discussion among the Puritans indicates clearly the difference between Puritanism and Calvinism, for the Calvinists always considered doctrine far superior to anything else. Neither Calvin nor Melanchthon had raised serious objections to episcopacy.[54]

It should be noted here that Presbyterianism is not identical with Puritanism. Before 1570 nearly all the Puritans were content to abide under episcopacy, while after 1570 there were many Puritans who are so called only because they intended to purify the government and rites in the Church of England. Some Puritans were pleased with a moderate "purification," while others demanded a great deal. The masses were generally opposed to Presbyterianism. The Presbyterians in England, as well as those in Scotland, wanted a state church with an altered form of government, with the pastors and elders wielding the authority that formerly had been controlled largely by the bishops. The Puritans were united in their plan to purify the Church of England, either moderately or radically, but chiefly gradually.

After 1567 the clergy in the Church of England slowly lost the

[53] R. Bronkema, *l.c.*, pp. 46-47.
[54] R. Bronkema, *l.c.*, pp. 47, 31.

reverence for Calvin which had characterized the generation of Cranmer. This became very noticeable after 1618, when both the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury adopted the Arminian interpretation of predestination.[55] This was the time when a gulf was fixed between the High Church Party and the Low Church Party, and when finally it was deemed impossible for most of the Puritans to remain peacefully within the Church of England, because no attention was paid by the men in power to their demands for purification and change in church government. Thus we approach the period in which occurred the great Puritan migration to New England.

Having sketched the rise of Puritanism in England, we are now in a position to investigate more fully the relation between Puritanism and capitalism. We may start with the recently adopted assumption that Lutheranism, Catholicism and Anglicanism were too conservative to yield to the demands of the growing trade and industry, but that Calvin and his followers were progressive, thus explaining the great success attained by the English in the field of economic expansion. That this assumption is not supported by the history of Dutch capitalism need not need to disturb us at this point. We did note, however, that at the very moment when the friends and disciples of Calvin were in control of the ecclesiastical policies of the English government under Edward VI, the statute was passed permitting no more lending of money at interest. It also seems remarkable that Henry VIII, who was by no means a Calvinist, had been so liberal as to permit interest charges up to ten per cent, which was twice as high as Calvin thought proper, and also much higher than seemed just or fair to Luther. When in 1571 his statute was resurrected under Queen Elizabeth, England was a Protestant country, and Henry Sée, the best-known authority on economic history in France, has suggested that possibly the Puritans might have had something to do with this.[56]

[55] See my book, *Hugo Grotius in England,* Chs. III-V.

[56] H. Sée, "Puritans, Juifs et capitalisme," in *Science et Philosophie de l'Histoire* (Paris, 1928), p. 313. The same question appears in the article by the same writer in the *Revue Historique,* Vol. CLV (1927), "Dans quelle mesure Puritains et Juifs ont-ils contribué aux progrès du capitalisme moderne?" See p. 63: "L'Eglise anglicaine elle-même se montrait résolument hostile au prêt à intéret . . . et cependant, dès 1571, le gouvernement des Tudor dut reconnaitre la légitimité de l'*usury,* quand elle ne dépassait pas le taux de 10 0/0. Etait-ce sous l'influence des puritains?"

Professor Sée reasons that the Anglican Church was resolutely opposed to loans at interest and to speculations of all sorts, but somehow it was obliged to recognize usury as legitimate as long as the rates of interest did not exceed ten per cent. This line of reasoning is perfectly in accord with that of Professor Hauser, as seen above, and also with a former pronouncement by Sée himself in a charming book dealing with the origins of modern capitalism, where he draws this conclusion: "The religious revolution, especially Calvinism, powerfully contributed to the modern conception of capitalism, as has been admirably indicated by two German scholars, Max Weber and, later, Troeltsch. The doctrine of Calvin, as far as the taking of interest is concerned, was diametrically opposed to that of the Roman Catholic Church. . . . This viewpoint of Calvin approaches closely that of the Jews. . . . We shall see later that the Puritans were precisely the people who were among the most active supporters of modern capitalism.[57]

It would seem that Professor Sée did not study the circumstances under which the statute of 1552 was passed. Calvinism was much in evidence there, and also in the making of the Forty-Two Articles of the Anglican Church, especially when the doctrines of transubstantiation and predestination were discussed. But in 1571 the monarch upon the throne was Elizabeth, whose attachment to the altar and the candles was such that the Calvinists in England were sorely vexed. When the Puritans objected to the elaborate ceremonies in the state church, she turned to them a cold shoulder. Furthermore, when the change in church government was discussed by the Puritans, she grew angry. We have seen that some of the Puritans were actually imprisoned, and presently we shall hear of a number of English congregations which were forced to worship on Dutch soil before the end of the sixteenth century.

An excellent discussion of how the bill of 1571 was viewed by a number of speakers in the House of Commons has been preserved. It shows that Mr. Molley, a lawyer for the business interests in London, was the only one who used modern arguments and believed that one could henceforth ignore the biblical injunctions against usury. Dr. Wilson, whom we shall meet below, the Master of Requests, made an eloquent speech in favor of the statute of

[57] H. Sée, *Les origines du capitalisme moderne* (Paris, 1926), pp. 46-47.

1552. Mr. Bell spoke mildly in favor of the new bill, and Serjeant Lovelace argued that one might as well pass a law against drunkenness, pride and envy, as against usury. He, therefore, also supported the bill. But Mr. Norton, a correspondent of Calvin, who translated Calvin's *Institute of the Christian Religion* into English, "shewed that all usury is biting." Mr. Fleetwood "shewed also that usury was *malum in se*." But the bill finally passed both houses.[58]

That Thomas Norton, a warm friend of Calvin, should have so strongly opposed the bill of 1571 and should have shown great attachment to the statute of 1552, is logical. The statute of 1552 was clearly the work of those men who were later known as Puritans or as the founders of Puritanism. In a letter, dated November 13, 1552, we find Norton writing to Calvin about the children of the duke of Somerset, and he assures Calvin that these children are not subject to evil influences in the field of religion, for in spite of reports to the contrary, the marquis of Winchester, with whom they are staying, "is a worthy and religious man, nor do I see in what respect he differs from us."[59] The man who was the first to translate Calvin's masterpiece into the English language, must have spoken as a true Calvinist in 1571, when he objected to the statute then before the House of Commons, of which he was a member at the time.

The statute of 1571 is not favorable to usury, that is true. The preamble reads thus: "Which later Act [5 & 6 Edward VI, c. 20] has not done so much good as was hoped it should, but rather the said vice of usury, and especially by way of sale of wares and shifts of interests has much more exceedingly abounded." So the English government made the discovery, similar to that made by the American government when the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution was violated on an immense scale, that evasions will be made when the demand for them is sufficiently strong. Thus had also the canonical prohibitions been violated. It is because of this admission by the English government that Professor Sée was led to conclude that the business instinct of the Puritans forced the queen to yield

[58] *The Journals of all the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. Sir Simonds D'Ewes (London, 1682), pp. 171-174, 179.

[59] *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. XLII, col. 410-411; *Zurich Letters*, III, pp. 339-342. There is also a letter in the *Corpus Reformatorum*, addressed by Norton to Calvin, and dated Nov. 25, 1550. Here he gives further evidence of his friendship with Calvin. See Vol. XLI, col. 661-663.

to their requests. The bill was supported in 1571 by the merchant class, as was to be expected. But Parliament put in a clause which shows that the Puritans were not consulted to any extent. Parliament stated that usury was not pleasing to God, but that nevertheless it had to be tolerated as long as the interest rates did not surpass ten per cent. In other words, a lesser evil was permitted, in order to slay the larger ones. If the Puritans had had their way, they would have argued that nothing which is distasteful to God should be permitted by law.[60]

Among the State Papers prepared in the reign of Queen Elizabeth there is to be found a document dating from the year 1570 which seems to throw welcome light on the origin of the statute of 1571 just mentioned. The document was endorsed by Mr. Tavernor, and it represents the attitude of the national government. It is entitled, *Discussion of Usury, with Proposal to Nationalize Exchange Business,* and it is closely connected with the Proclamation Prohibiting Private Exchange Business. According to the writer, the "insatiable vice of usury" has caused many inconveniences, notwithstanding the many sermons that have been preached about this vice by the clergy in recent years. He wishes that God would so move their pens that they would point out a way to remedy these inconveniences. In the meantime he will contribute his mite.

First of all he quotes from Melanchthon's discussion on contracts which was mentioned above in Chapter V. Then he refers to Thomas Aquinas, and he concludes with Aquinas that the lending of money on interest is not to be construed as usury in case the "borrower has given manifest cause of damage to the lender." He even avers that the Israelites were not forbidden in Exodus XXII to charge such interest on loans. Consequently he argues at length that the statute passed in the reign of Edward VI has caused many serious evils, especially that which was called "dry exchange," the practice of sending one's money into another country and of receiving it back again with interest.

Inasmuch as Melanchthon receives twice as much attention as all earlier writers combined, while no other author of the sixteenth century is mentioned, the impression we have gained thus far that Melanchthon was treated with special favor by the English in the

[60] H. M. Robertson, *l.c.,* pp. 122-123.

period between 1547 and 1571 is confirmed. This favor was due partly to his conciliatory attitude, partly to his liberal view of the eucharist, which was apparently identical with that of the queen, and partly to the scholarly and sound manner in which he had discussed the problem of usury. Whereas Luther and Calvin had based their opinions on usury almost exclusively upon the Bible, Melanchthon quoted extensively from the classics (especially Aristotle and Cicero) and the civil law. The lawyers and statesmen who served Queen Elizabeth turned naturally for advice to Philip Melanchthon, rather than to the Puritan pastors or theologians. They argued that England was unique in not permitting the lending of money on interest, and they realized perfectly what had given England this peculiar distinction. The zealous Puritans had been largely responsible for the statute of 1552. They, with their constant references to the supreme authority of the Bible, had caused much inconvenience, and the lawyers were hoping in vain that the preachers would find deliverance for the merchants. Not by appealing to the verdict of Luther or Calvin, but to the man with the proper respect for law and the classics did they finally turn. Their attitude was perfectly natural, and it helps us understand the role played by the Puritans throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth.[61]

A still more valuable source of information on this subject is an extensive work by Dr. Thomas Wilson, entitled *A Discourse upon Usury,* which was composed in 1569. R. H. Tawney, who edited the work, provided for it an admirable introduction of 172 pages, showing what were the issues involved in the passage of the statute of 1571. Wilson was the author of two excellent treatises on rhetoric and logic, and he was a member of Parliament at the time the statute of 1571 became law. His hostility to the lending of money is rather surprising, seeing that he had traveled in Italy and the Netherlands, and had haggled with some of the shrewdest capitalists in Antwerp.

Wilson presents his discourse in the form of a colloquy, in which four persons take part, the preacher, who naturally is bitterly opposed to what was termed usury; the merchant, who is guilty of

[61] *Tudor Economic Documents,* ed. R. H. Tawney and E. Power, Vol. III (London, 1924), pp. 359-370.

avarice; the civilian, or doctor, who agrees generally with the preacher; and the lawyer, who sides with the merchant in his interpretation of usury. The discourse is similar in tone and structure to one of Erasmus' finest literary productions, *The Book Against the Barbarians,* of which we have only one copy in the original version, that which I have reproduced as an appendix in my book, *The Youth of Erasmus.* Inasmuch as Dr. Wilson devoted two treatises to the study of logic and rhetoric, there can be no doubt that he was familiar with either the *Book Against the Barbarians* or the *Colloquies* of Erasmus, the former being a defence of classical literatures, the latter a practical text book of rhetoric in the form of conversations.

The first important fact in Dr. Wilson's *Discourse Upon Usury* to attract our attention is his dedication to Lord Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who was the protector of the English Puritans in the first half of Elizabeth's reign. We may presume that the person to whom the book was dedicated favored the views presented therein by the author. Furthermore, the dedication to Leicester is followed by a letter which was found in the study of the bishop of Salisbury, dated August 20, 1569, and composed shortly before the death of the bishop. The writer expressed his pleasure and his admiration in referring especially to the excellent and copious sources that had been consulted by Dr. Wilson, including Greek and Latin doctors, the civil and canon law.

"I do not know," said Wilson, "any place in Christendom so much subject to this foul sin of usury as the whole realm of England is at present, and has been of late years. For men of wealth are now wholly given everywhere to idleness, to get their gain with ease, and to live by lending upon the sweat and labor of others only. Whereas God wishes that each person live in his own vocation, and that he who will not labor either with body or mind according to his calling should not eat at all, forbidding men to make lending a kind of living. . . . There are two kinds of men that are always to be watched carefully; the one is the dissembling gospeler, and the other is the wilful and hardened papist. The first under the color of religion overthrows all religion, and the other, who professes a hatred for the evangelical religion, devises by indirect means to advance his

welfare. The result is that between the secret dissembler and the open blasphemer the world is made a prey. . . ."

Wilson then tells Leicester that the preachers are doing an excellent job in warning the people against usury, but with almost no practical result. The civil rulers will not support the preachers. May God send a Solon to England who will see that the censures of the preachers will be translated into active measures of checking the evil of usury. "Would to God that England had a Cromwell, I will say no more." Thomas Cromwell, the chancellor under Henry VIII, had arranged for the marriage between Henry and the Protestant daughter (Anna) of the Duke of Cleves, and he had planned an alliance with the Protestant princes in Germany, as we noted above. When the German bride appeared in England, and Henry saw how ugly she was, at least in his opinion, he blamed Cromwell for his ill fortune and had him executed in 1540, the year of the ill-fated marriage. Cromwell had been very energetic in opposing the Catholic clergy, and he had hoped to introduce Protestantism, where he was not appreciated by his royal master. Now it is the hope of Dr. Wilson that the earl of Leicester, and his brother, the earl of Warwick, will both come to the rescue of the English people. "I have known you," he wrote, "and that noble race of your brethren from their younger years." He has had sufficient proof that Leicester has read from the best sources, both Latin and Italian, and will thus be qualified to serve the queen in the affairs of state. Perhaps there was a connection between the duty performed by Dr. Wilson as ambassador to the Netherlands in 1574 and the protectorship over the Netherlands given to Leicester by the queen eleven years later.

The first writers to whose judgment Wilson appealed were St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose and St. Bernard; and he reserved, as was proper, the greater attention for St. Augustine. Several pagan writers and officials in the Roman Empire are mentioned next. The customary texts in the Bible are also used to advantage. In the oration by the lawyer, which follows that by the preacher, some of the arguments in favor of interest charges on loans are given. Calling upon St. Mary from time to time, he appears to show that he is still a Catholic, and thus he is made to represent the view of the papist condemned in advance by the author. He argues that charity begins at home, and that it would be well to say

a little less about one's neighbor and a little more about oneself. The merchant then explains his view, which plainly reveals his selfish nature. The preacher, in his reply, mentions that point and brings up St. Augustine's opinion once more, followed by that of St. Ambrose. Then we receive an excellent oration by the civilian, or doctor, who apparently represents the viewpoint of the author more nearly than any of the other speakers, since Wilson was a jurist by training, and had obtained a doctor's degree in civil law.

The doctor's oration is scholarly and well organized. The first source it gives is St. Bernard, but a much longer reference is that to Melanchthon, the first Protestant writer to be quoted or mentioned by the author. The next source given is the Canon Law, reproducing the three passages from Augustine, Jerome and Ambrose which we noted in our first chapter. Two decisions by two popes follow, and then some references to the Decretals and the Clementines in the Canon Law, and next the decisions by two emperors in the East Roman Empire. The famous dictum by Aristotle receives proper attention as well, and it is explained with considerable insight into the meaning of the phrase, which cannot be said for many Protestant writers of recent times.

After a lengthy discussion of the contributions made to the study of usury by various commentators of the Canon Law, we are introduced to Charles du Moulin, who was mentioned in a previous chapter. This lawyer, as we saw, opposed all charges of interest except in those instances where both the borrower and the lender shared in the profit, and on nearly equal terms. A general discussion follows, in which the civilian brings up the names of Bucer, Brentius, Calvin and Beza, as being "the best of this age," and supporting the opinion expressed by Du Moulin. The preacher then replies that he does indeed honor Calvin and Bucer, "as the chosen vessels of God, and yet I am not bound to any opinion of theirs except those that agree with the Word of God. . . . And I know that they never directly allowed usury, but were forced by circumstances to write their opinion. I know the old Fathers have expounded usury as I understand it, and therefore have forbidden it utterly, and the Catholic consent of Christendom has agreed to this." And when the lawyer intimates that before long the preacher will have to yield to the force of circumstances, the latter says that he is interested only

in what the Word of God has to say. That was exactly the position of the Dutch Calvinists of the time. They also believed that Calvin had made a concession to his followers in Geneva, and that they did not feel obliged to do the same in their own country or city.

A little later the preacher refers also to Luther: "And Luther (amongst others) is so vehement against all usury whatsoever, as he was ever against the Pope himself." The reference is brief but significant. He continues a bit farther down by referring again to Calvin: "These other learned men whom you named, Calvin and Bucer, did somewhat enlarge this law by a charitable exposition, for the hardness of men's hearts void from mercy, and also for very necessity's sake, to help the needy banished men then dwelling amongst them, not but that they would have all men lend freely as God has commanded. And yet what warranty have they for so expounding the Scriptures of God?" Thus the learned editor of Wilson's discourse finds support in the old legend about Luther the peasant and Calvin the bourgeois: "While Luther saw economic life with the eyes of a peasant and a monk, Calvin approached it as a man of affairs." [62] That Luther's father joined the middle class when Martin was still a youth, having been a superintendent of mines at the time Martin was born, seems to matter little to our modern commentators. And how a distinguished French scholar propounded the same fallacious theory we shall now observe.

Calvin, so argues Professor Sée, was not opposed to manual labor, nor to the emphasis placed by certain persons upon their vocation, nor to the acquisition of great wealth. Consequently, the Calvinists in Holland were responsible for the great expansion experienced by Dutch trade and banking. The same may be said of the Puritans.[63] Here we are face to face again with the old legend. That the Calvinists and Puritans whom we have met thus far would also have considered it a legend, is certain. In their separation from the Lutherans and the Catholics, and later, from the Anglicans as well, they did not pay any attention to the question of hard work, the importance of one's calling, and the right to acquire great material wealth. On the contrary, their attention was concentrated upon

[62] *A Discourse upon Usury by Thomas Wilson,* ed. R. H. Tawney (London, 1925), p. 111.

[63] H. Sée, *Les origines,* p. 47.

doctrinal and ecclesiastical differences, as I have indicated above. There were certain points of difference between the Catholics and the Lutherans, between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, and between the Anglicans and the Puritans. When these points were discussed, the problems of usury, almsgiving, relief of the poor and manual labor, were generally ignored, since all the great leaders were agreed upon the measures that should be taken to solve these problems. No Puritan dreamed of leaving the Church of England, or of letting himself be imprisoned because the policy of relief of the poor, or the attitude displayed by the bishops toward the importance of hard work, did not please him. Nobody left for Switzerland or Germany in the reign of Queen Mary, because she and her Catholic advisers showed a reactionary trend of thought in trying to solve economic problems. Nobody came to America because Archbishop Laud did not want the Puritans to work so hard as they were doing. Inasmuch as Calvin could find time to fill only fifty pages out of more than thirty thousand to devote to economic problems, it must not surprise anyone that his "advanced" followers also were sadly lacking in this respect.

The basic principles of Puritanism were clearly set forth in two treatises published in 1572 and addressed to Parliament, entitled respectively, *An Admonition to the Parliament,* and *A Second Admonition to Parliament.* The first opens with these significant words: "Seeing that nothing in this mortal life is more diligently to be sought for, and carefully to be looked unto than the restitution of true religion and reformation of God's church." [64] And in the second there appears this important passage: "But shut God out of your assemblies and courts, as hitherto in this your last parliament you have done nothing as you ought, no though you have been solicited, but have suffered those that were your solicitors, to be molested, you shall find, both that you ought to have sought the kingdom of God first, and also you shall find, if you consider not your own ways in your hearts, how you think it a time to build sealed houses, to devise laws for the preservation and prosperity of your commonwealth, and neglect God His church, leave that waste, provide not for that, you shall find (as the Prophet says) you shall

[64] *Puritan Manifestoes. A Study of the Origin of the Puritan Revolt.* Ed. by W. H. Frere and C. E. Douglas (London, 1907), p. 8.

sow much, and bring in little, you shall eat, and not have enough." [65]

Mr. H. M. Robertson has won the gratitude of many readers by making a careful study of the Puritan doctrine of the "calling," and he has seen fit, with much justice, to reserve for it a whole chapter in his interesting book on Weber's thesis. He reproduces numerous passages from the works of Robert Crowley, Thomas Lever, and Hugh Latimer, not to mention Richard Baxter, who unwittingly served to illustrate for the German and French schools of economics what his brethren in the faith believed one hundred years before he ever wrote a line. Robertson indicates, for example, that when Latimer referred to the manual labor performed by Christ, in which respect He acted as our example, the writer merely expressed a viewpoint that was common to all good Christians. He mentions the work published in 1550 by Crowley, entitled *Voice of the Last Trumpet.... Calling all Estates of Men to the Right Path of Their Vocation,* and in this connection he explains that the Puritans of the sixteenth century, when they discussed their calling (vocation), were vastly more interested in being honest and virtuous than in trying to make a lot of money. Certainly, they were of the opinion that virtue pleased God far more than the making of money. But after the middle of the seventeenth century, so admits Robertson, when Puritanism had been diluted and weakened by the enormous expansion of capitalism, the typical Puritan writer or preacher showed exactly how this weakening of Puritan qualities was reflected in their own viewpoints.[66]

Even so, I am convinced that Robertson, like E. Beins and Professor K. Holl (who were mentioned in a previous chapter), made a greater concession to the Weberian school than was at all necessary. When W. Sombart is attacked by Weber for allegedly having mistranslated the pronouncements of scholastic writers like Antonine of Florence, Robertson does not know whether Sombart is guilty or not.[67] And when Beins, in preparing his summary of an excellent treatise for which he deserves much credit, concludes that Weber's thesis is refuted by the history of Dutch capitalism, he grants that perhaps R. H. Tawney in his treatment of seventeenth

[65] *Pur. Man.*, p. 89.
[66] H. M. Robertson, *l.c.*, pp. 5-27.
[67] *L.c.*, p. 161.

century Puritanism is justified in supporting Weber. More than that, he feels that Calvinism in the Dutch Republic assisted capitalism in about the same degree as, according to Tawney, Puritanism supported capitalism in England, namely, after 1650.[68] Similarly, Professor Holl, after having smashed the Weber thesis in important sections with reference to events in the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, graciously admits that Weber may be right in his analysis of the subsequent period. In England and America, says Holl, Calvinism strongly assisted the growth of capitalism. Holl probably made this concession simply because he had never studied the history of Calvinism in England and America.[69]

It is likely, however, that when a theory does not fit a religion in a certain century, being exactly the reverse of the truth, its application to the same religion in the following century will probably reflect the fundamental weakness of the theory once more, though perhaps to a lesser extent than was the case before. The reader will surmise that, since Calvinism was strongly opposed to the spirit of capitalism in the sixteenth century, a seeming change in that religion must mean simply that many persons who professed that religion had become untrue to its fundamental principles. If we can now pass on to the following period with an open mind, we shall probably find that capitalism caused many Calvinists and many Puritans to surrender the old antagonism to Mammon-worship. These pseudo-Calvinists will no doubt look for and find excuses for their behavior, and they will create a demand for treatises and books to be written by eminent scholars and virtuous preachers, who will still parade under the name of Calvinists, even after they have rejected Calvin's doctrine of predestination; yes, in many cases after they have ceased to be Christians.

[68] E. Beins, *l.c.*, p. 155.

[69] K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte,* Vol. III (Tübingen, 1928), p. 402.

Chapter VIII

CAPITALISM VERSUS PURITANISM

"Puritanism," writes R. H. Tawney, "not the Tudor secession from Rome, was the true English Reformation, and it is from its struggle against the old order that an England which is unmistakably modern emerges. But, immense as were its accomplishments, on the high stage of public affairs, its achievements in that inner world, of which politics are but the scaffolding, were mightier still." [1] Stupendous also was the influence exerted by Puritanism in New England, and through New England, in the whole of the United States. "Our whole culture," remarks W. L. Sperry in the *Yale Review* for October, 1926, "is an effect of which seventeenth-century English Puritanism was the immediate historical cause. . . . American institutions represent not so much a development as a deliberate arrest of English Puritanism."

Whatever may have been the economic aspects of Puritanism, it will undoubtedly be an instructive task to discover how Puritanism as it entered North America grew out of the Puritanism, or Calvinism, which has been described in the preceding chapter. Occasionally we shall examine also the various branches of the Calvinist religion on the Continent which underwent changes very similar in character to those which were revealed by the English Puritans after 1650.

It must be understood at the outset that Puritanism was a form of religion which depended to a lesser or greater degree upon the Calvinist faith and church government, the degree of dependence being left in each individual case to the views of each person. Puritanism in the seventeenth century resembled Calvinism so closely that there have been writers in this country, including Douglas

[1] *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York, 1926), pp. 198-199.

Campbell, who even applied the term "Puritans" to the Dutch Calvinists. Campbell's two-volume work, entitled *The Puritans in Holland, England and America* represents the attitude of many scholars who discussed Puritanism about the beginning of the twentieth century. Another is Dr. Abraham Kuyper, who was the outstanding Calvinist in the Netherlands, and the leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, as well as the founder of the Calvinist university in Amsterdam, called the Free University. He frequently used the words "Puritanism" and "Calvinism" interchangeably.[2]

Sometimes it is impossible to dispose of a term when used erroneously, as is the case with the name "Gothic Architecture," and sometimes a popular notion cannot be corrected any more. Perhaps we face such a situation as we are about to discuss the religion of the Puritans who rose under the early Stuarts and prepared the stage for the career of Oliver Cromwell. If so, it will not be a serious matter, and we shall constantly bear in mind that, owing to the close resemblance between Puritanism of the seventeenth century and Calvinism of either the sevententh or the twentieth century, one cannot always distinguish between the two religions.

That so eminent an authority on Calvinism as Dr. Kuyper should have used the two terms interchangeably, is an indication of the peculiar task that confronts us here. Dr. Kuyper was one of the guides of a powerful Calvinist revival in the Netherlands during the second half of the nineteenth century. Many thousands of persons, no longer satisfied with the laxity of discipline and of theology in the old Reformed Church, decided to return to the pristine faith of the men and women who founded the Dutch Republic. I was brought up by such people myself, and as I recall the life our family led, I can understand fully the reason why Calvinism and Puritanism are often confused with each other. Every Sunday there were two long services in church, and each sermon was discussed at length by all our relatives in the city. My brother and I were not allowed to play on the streets on Sunday, lest we might be contaminated by the worldly children of the neighborhood. None of us was permitted to attend a play in the local theatre, nor any picture in some cinema. When the annual fair occurred, we had to walk far around the tents on our way to our school, which was a

[2] A. Kuyper, *Calvinism* (New York, 1898), pp. 85-91.

public school, supported entirely by the national government, but nevertheless controlled by the Calvinists. While the "worldly" children in one of the other schools, which we styled "public schools," were enjoying part of their summer vacation, we continued with our studies until the fair (*kermis*) was over with. The playing of cards was forbidden to us, and naturally, dancing was looked upon as a dreaded sin. We had to memorize the Heidelberg Catechism, and once a week we went to the catechism class. My father said a long prayer on arising in the morning and before and after each meal another prayer. Furthermore, at the conclusion of every meal he read a chapter from the Bible, which we all regarded with very great reverence. There were no mistakes in that book, so we believed, and the Word of God was far above the regulations of the civil authorities.

Dr. Kuyper's party grew so strong that, in combining with the Roman Catholic party, it secured a majority in the two houses of the national parliament, and today, under Prime Minister Colijn, the Calvinists are stronger than ever since the secession from the old church. The ministers of the state church, of which the queen is automatically a member, are either orthodox Calvinists or liberals. As liberals they are not considered Christians by the Calvinists, and one must be careful indeed to use the word "Calvinist" when describing the religion or habits of the various members of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. There has to be some line of demarcation between the Calvinists and the others, for it seems hardly fair to the Calvinists to call those ministers Calvinists who do not even believe that Christ was the only begotten Son of God, that He was born of the virgin Mary, and that after His death upon the cross, He arose from the dead. During the course of the nineteenth century a large number of Dutch Calvinists felt obliged to leave their homes in the old country and to migrate to America. In so doing they recognized the value of the Calvinist faith, and they were willing to make great sacrifices in order to maintain the principles of the faith in their own lives. It seems to me that their lives are an excellent illustration of the manner in which the English Puritans behaved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They did not have much to say about economic problems, for their at-

tention was continually concentrated upon the need of saving the faith of their fathers.

It is a curious fact that in almost every instance the relation between religion and capitalism has been discussed by experts in the field of economics (Weber, Tawney, Sée, Hauser, etc.), whose influence has been enormous, even in our theological seminaries. Troeltsch, who was an exception, had the opportunity to shave off the ragged edges of the Weber thesis, which goes to show that a writer must look upon a religion as a system of thought that is primarily concerned with spiritual things. The number of writers who have criticized Weber for having failed to do this is legion, hence it remains necessary to analyze Puritanism with this thought in mind. There have been lukewarm religions, and there have been religions with great vitality; Puritanism was a vital religion, and it acquired an influence upon the lives of men and women which drove them away from intolerance or made them fight for liberty at home. It affected not merely the creed of the old churches but it regulated the lives of the people in minute details. It led to deeds of remarkable valor, and also to acts of cruelty. Fighting for the establishment of liberty, it frequently became the agent of intolerance and repression. Puritanism is full of apparent contradictions, and, having never been organized into a definite creed or church of its own, it represents at various periods and in various countries a medley of innumerable beliefs and habits. It is for this reason that I observed in an earlier chapter that one cannot take passages from a limited number of Puritan writers and determine from these what Puritanism stood for at any given period, let alone the whole of modern history.

Among the Puritans of the seventeenth century may be reckoned the followers of Thomas Cartwright, who was professor at Cambridge since 1569, but, owing to his supposedly radical views, he aroused much opposition among the bishops, and was dismissed in 1574. First he went to Antwerp, and then to Middelburg, in the Dutch province of Zeeland, where he served as pastor of the English congregation. One distinguished authority on the history of Puritanism has testified that "to Thomas Cartwright must clearly be assigned the chiefest place in bringing Puritanism in

England to the dignity of a developed system." [3] What Cartwright stood for may be gathered from an excellent biography by A. T. S. Pearson, entitled *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism* (1925). "Without question," says Pearson, "Cartwright was regarded as the most representative Puritan of the time. . . . He laid stress upon the reform of abuses that violated the laws of righteousness. As an anti-Romanist he represented the reaction that came with the Reformation against the practices of the unreformed Church. But behind his moralism and his negative attitude toward Rome there lay a positive experience, namely, that immediacy of spiritual knowledge, which is sometimes recognized as the essence of Puritanism." [4] Cartwright wanted especially a Presbyterian form of church government, but he is generally considered as good a Puritan as Richard Hooker, who opposed Presbyterianism.

Owing to the influence exerted by Cartwright upon the next generation of Puritans, it is well to note his views on economic questions. R. H. Tawney, who is not nearly so friendly to the Weberian thesis as some writers have thought, gives an admirable description of Cartwright's form of Puritanism. He calls attention to what he terms the "Godly Discipline" built up by the early Puritans, and he cites Cartwright as the leader of the vanguard of those who rose against James I and Charles I. Tawney warns the reader against an attempt made but too often to simplify Puritanism: "But it is a strange school which does not teach more than one lesson, and the social reactions of Puritanism, trenchant, permanent and profound, are not to be summarized in the simple formula that it fostered individualism." He points out next that, in spite of the authority that Troeltsch and Cunningham have lent to the Weber thesis, the spiritual tissues of Puritanism still confuse and defie us.[5]

The godly discipline, argues Tawney correctly, was the very ark of the Puritan covenant, upon which Cartwright based his treatises. Cartwright and his enthusiastic disciples desired above all that the whole Gospel in its purity should be preached as the supreme authority. Not the "filthy Canon Law," not the works of the schol-

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[3] H. M. Dexter, *Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years* (London, 1879), p. 55.

[4] *L.c.*, pp. 188, 410.

[5] R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, pp. 211-212.

astic philosophers, but the Bible was the final test of the goodness of a person's life and of the government. Cartwright, who was familiar with Dutch Calvinism, reflected it perfectly, and as a result he declared that "usury is a heinous offence against God and the Church," and he naturally proposed that anyone who lent money on interest should not be permitted to partake of the sacrament of Communion.[6]

One of the characteristics of Puritanism is seen in the letter which Thomas Cartwright wrote on August 13, 1591, to Lady Russell: "Besides the mark of learning in yourself rare in your sex, that is also a worthy commendation that you favor those who are learned or rather (meaning myself) who desire to be learned. Yet this is not that wherein your praise does or ought to consist; as that which although of all other parts of the flower of the grass tarries longest, yet fades away, and is no better than a summer flower. . . . Godliness only is that which endures and makes to endure such as have gotten possession of it." [7] However, Cartwright did not object to the financial assistance received from some of the wealthy Puritan patrons in England, nor did he feel obliged to part with those possessions which he did not absolutely need for himself or his immediate family. We may gather from a perusal of his will and testament that he had acquired a considerable fortune, leaving one hundred pounds to one of his sons and two hundred to the other; besides the property which he bequeathed to his wife.[8] Thus it will be seen that merely quoting from a writer does not give a complete picture of his point of view.

Other important leaders of the Puritans who lived in the second half of the sixteenth century were Robert Browne and his friend Robert Harrison, who in 1580 became the chiefs of a new Puritan party, the Brownists. Both were Cambridge men, and they supported the theology and the political and social views which were preached there with such success that in the reign of James I, Cambridge was referred to as "a nest of Puritans."[9] Moreover, both men

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[6] H. G. Wood, *The Influence of the Reformation on Ideas Concerning Wealth and Property* (London, 1913), p. 142.

[7] A. F. S. Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright*, p. 467.

[8] A. F. S. Pearson, *l.c.*, pp. 482-483.

[9] R. Bronkema, *l.c.*, p. 54.

removed to Norwich, a city in eastern England, which in the year 1571 counted 2925 Dutch and Flemish refugees. It was about this time that Browne and Harrison arrived in Norwich. They came into contact there with some of the Mennonites who had fled from the Netherlands because of the persecution under the Spanish duke of Alva. According to an official report by the regent Margaret of Parma, who was replaced by Alva in the summer of 1567, about two hundred thousand persons fled from Antwerp alone, just as Alva was ready to take over the reins of government in the Netherlands for his master, King Philip II of Spain.[10] There can be no doubt that a number of counties in eastern England received many of the Dutch and Flemish Protestants, and that Puritanism gained fresh impetus from the influx of many Calvinists and Mennonites. The duchess of Parma reported to the Spanish king how the refugees told their friends abroad that they came for religious reasons.

The Mennonites had developed a system of church government which lent its name to a new denomination, the Congregational Church. Browne appears to have borrowed his views on ecclesiastical policy from the Mennonites: "It was then that Browne heard, for the first time, what the Mennonites had proclaimed more than half a century earlier. In substance the Mennonite belief is this: Every true believer has not only the right but is even sacredly bound to form a church wheresoever he has found none to join. Such churches should be utterly free and independent associations, subject to no power whatever, but to that of Jesus Christ alone. They were authorized in the New Testament to elect their own pastors, elders and deacons without anybody's interposition. All faithful people were equal in rank, and every hierarchical distinction came of evil. In a word, Browne found among these people the complete practice of what afterwards was termed in England 'Congregationalism.' . . . Besides, he got to know their views on God's Kingdom, as being one with the visible church; the purity of manners they exacted from the faithful. . . . In his eyes the Church

[10] *Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II,* ed. M. R. C. Bakhuizen van den Brink and J. S. Theissen, Vol. I (Utrecht, 1925), p. 412.

of England was a Babylon, a kingdom of Satan. . . . This was the origin of the Separatists or separated Puritanism." [11]

What Tawney has said about the "godly discipline" of the Puritans who remained in the Church of England, may be said as much and more of those who left the Anglican Church. The first congregation which the Brownists had was that at Norwich, but they were unable there to worship as they wished, wherefore they removed to Middelburg in the Netherlands (1581). At that time Cartwright was still there at the head of the first English congregation of merchants. Owing to the differences in their respective views of church government, the two English congregations at Middelburg could not unite. Leaving Harrison in charge of the flock in the Netherlands, Browne traveled in England and Scotland, where he was imprisoned at least thirty-two times. Discouraged perhaps by his failure to win many converts to his new faith, he suddenly renounced it about the year 1589. However, the others continued to follow the path marked out by him, and, seeing his apostasy, they gradually dropped the name "Brownists." Sir Walter Raleigh reported to Parliament in 1592 that their number had reached a total of two thousand. Among them was Henry Barrowe, the founder of the Barrowists, who was put to death on April 6, 1593.

The first of the Pilgrim Fathers seems to have been John Penry, who, shortly before he was killed for treason because of his views on church government in 1593, wrote this admonition to his followers: "And my good brethren, seeing banishment with loss of goods is likely to betide you all, prepare yourselves for this hard entreaty, and rejoice that you are made worthy for Christ's cause to suffer and bear all these things. And I beseech you, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that none of you in this case look upon his particular estate, but regard the general state of the Church of God, that the same may go and be kept together, whithersoever it shall please God to send you."

Then Penry made some remarks which for a good reason have seldom if ever been noted by Weber and his disciples: "Let not those of you, that either had stocks in your hands, or some likely

[11] J. de Hoop Scheffer, *History of the Free Churchmen,* pp. 8-9. For a more detailed treatment of Browne's life, see R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism* (London, 1907), pp. 121-124.

trades to live by, dispose of yourselves where it may be most commodious for your outward estate, and in the meantime suffer the poor ones, that have no such means, either to bear the whole work upon their weak shoulders, or to end their days in sorrow and mourning for want of outward and inward comforts in the land of strangers. But consult with the whole church. Yea, with the brethren of our places how the church may be kept together, and built, whithersoever they go. Let not the poor and the friendless be forced to stay behind here, and to break a good conscience for want of your support and kindness to them, that they may go with you." [12]

The advice of Penry was soon followed, and under the leadership of Henry Ainsworth the pilgrims set out for Amsterdam, where they expected to receive "full liberty." They arrived in 1593, and, after some delay, received permission from the magistrates to worship there. Although Ainsworth was a real scholar and an expert in the Hebrew language, he had to be content at first with the humble job of a porter to a bookseller at nine pence (twenty-five cents) a week. With so small an income, he could not provide himself with more than the poorest hash. Many of the others also suffered want, so that for twenty years after the settlement was founded in Amsterdam, there were several who received alms from various sources, especially the English Presbyterian Church, which, by the way, is still in existence in the Begijnhof. Since the exiles did not know the Dutch language, it was no easy task to find suitable means of making a living. The betrothal records of the young people show that most of the men found work as bombazine weavers, button makers, glovers and tailors.[13]

In 1608 followed the migration of pilgrims from the village of Scrooby, where the congregation of Brownists was led by Richard Clyfton, John Robinson and William Brewster. Governor Bradford, in his celebrated work, *History of Plymouth Plantation,* has described the difficulties under which the poor, persecuted Pilgrim

[12] J. de Hoop Scheffer, *l.c.,* pp. 14-15.

[13] J. de Hoop Scheffer, *l. c.,* pp. 23-25, 183-196; F. J. Powicke, *Henry Barrow Separatist (1550-1593) and the Exiled Church at Amsterdam* (London, 1900). On pp. 238-239 we read that the Barrowists in Amsterdam exhibited the typical Puritan characteristics in objecting to the use of beautiful clothes.

Fathers labored. About the month of May, 1608, they arrived in Amsterdam, numbering three or four hundred souls, of which nearly two hundred were members of the church. Their subsequent removal to the city of Leyden is one of the familiar incidents in the history of the American people, and there is no doubt that the economic theories of Pastor John Robinson, although he remained at Leyden, are of interest to anyone who desires to know what is meant by the essence of Puritanism.

When John Robinson was still living in Amsterdam, he and his friend John Smyth received a letter from Joseph Hall in England, in which he is accused of living in Amsterdam "in the stench of Judaism, Arianism, Anabaptism." In the same year (1608), Robinson replied thus: "We have nothing in common with Jews, Arians and Anabaptists but the streets and the market-place." He could well say that, having steadfastly refused to follow Smyth's example and become a Baptist. He was really disgusted with the controversies carried on among the Brownists in Amsterdam concerning baptism. Consequently, he determined in 1609 to remove with the majority of the congregation to Leyden.

The petition addressed by Robinson to the magistrates of Leyden, and written in the Dutch language may be translated as follows: "To my Honorable Lords, Burghermaster and Court of Justice of the City of Leyden. I beg leave, respectfully and obediently, to acquaint, John Robinson [spelled Jan Robarthse], minister of God's Word, together with some of the church of the Christian Reformed Religion, born in the Kingdom of Great Britain, to the number of one hundred or thereabout, men and women, that they would intend to settle down within this city and the jurisdiction thereof, one of these days, towards May next, to earn their livelihood by their various trades and traffics, without, however, causing the leave hindrance to anyone at all—so it is that said supplicants apply to Your Honorable, praying most urgently that it may please Your Honorable to grant them free consent to go to the aforesaid city." The request was granted on February 12, 1609.[14]

Robinson was a much more conservative Puritan than some of his friends in Amsterdam. There was, for example, John Paget, who

[14] J. de Hoop Scheffer, *l.c.*, p. 116; D. Plooij, *The Pilgrim Fathers from a Dutch Point of View* (New York, 1932), pp. 42-43.

in 1618 published a pamphlet entitled, *An Arrow Against Separation*. Here he attacked Robinson thus: "Seeing that Mr. Robinson and his people do not receive the members of the Church of England into their congregation, and this without any renunciation of the Church of England, without any repentance for the idolatries committed in the Church of England: how can you hold them to be a true church, and communion with them lawful." [15]

Professor D. Plooij, who really knows the Pilgrim Fathers that lived at one time in the Dutch Republic, says of Robinson: "The only university man (besides Brewer) was John Robinson; and beyond any doubt it has a been a blessing to the whole movement that this man, who was *facile princeps* in his circle, was a man not only of university training, but, more than that, a man of the noblest and purest character, of a quick and sharp wit, of real Christian humility, of a tender conscience, and of an all-embracing love. . . . Therefore, his name stood and shall stand first in the history of the Pilgrims and in the history of the United States: he was the Moses through whom God gave the newly born nation the commandments that should be their strength and their glory in the new country which he himself never saw." [16]

How brave Robinson was, may be seen in these words of his, written in the year 1617: "We are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange and hard land; which yet, in great part, we have by patience overcome." [17] It should not be imagined, however, that Robinson did not dearly love his native country. He thought so much of religion that he saw fit to leave England. But great was his tribute to England: "For the commonwealth and kingdom, as we honor it above all the states in the world, so would we thankfully embrace the meanest corner in it, at the extremest conditions of any people in the kingdom." [18]

Elsewhere, in one of his essays, he refers to the pleasant economic conditions in his native country as compared with the Dutch Re-

[15] C. Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters*, Vol. I, p. 293, note 1.

[16] D. Plooij, *l.c.*, p. 33.

[17] W. H. Burgess, *The Pastor of the Pilgrims. A Biography of John Robinson* (New York, 1920), p. 215. This excellent work contains many details worth knowing about John Robinson.

[18] W. H. Burgess, *l.c.*, p. VII.

public, which was exceedingly small in area, and much of that was barren heath or sand dunes, with an immense amount of useless marshes and lakes besides: "This difference I have observed . . . that whereas in plentiful countries, such as our own, it is half a shame to labor: in such others, wherein art and industry must supply nature's defects, as in the country where I have last lived, it is a shame for a man not to work and exercise himself in some one or other lawful vocation." [19] Here Robinson hits the nail squarely on the head.

Obviously, the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers was not attached to material riches, and we may say that in this respect his deeds were more eloquent than his words. It is for this reason that I have devoted a relatively large amount of space to the activities of the Puritans and other exiles from England who placed religious freedom above everything else that they possessed. Recalling his student days at the University of Cambridge, Robinson wrote these words in his essay, *On Riches and Poverty*: "A friend of mine in the University was wont to tell me merrily and wittily that there surely was something in this money more and better than he and I saw; seeing such a great, wise and learned man, whom he would name, loved it so well; and such another, as wise and learned as he; and so a third, and a fourth. He knew well enough it was not any good in it which he saw not; but lust and filthy covetousness in them, whose learning and wisdom should have taught them to despise and hate such base-mindedness." [20]

However, the Puritans and the Separatists generally were not the only Christians who in their time emphasized the need of industry

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[19] J. Robinson, *Works* (Boston, Mass., 1851), Vol. I, p. 114.

[20] J. Robinson, *Works,* Vol. I, p. 122. The following passages are also worth noting: "And in truth, if in any other thing, baseness of mind is seen in the love of money, and so they are justly contemned in the eyes of others, that are enamored of it. . . . That fools and idiots, that know no better things, should love money, is not strange: for oxen love grass; and swine draff. . . . And as riches are in themselves God's blessings, so we are to desire them of Him, and to use lawful diligence to get them for the comfortable course of our natural and civil state: for though we are able to bear poverty, if God send it, yet should we rather desire riches; as a man, though he can go afoot, yet will rather choose to ride. Secondly, to free us from such temptations unto sin, as poverty puts many upon, Prov. XXX, 8, 9." Extreme poverty and riches are deemed dangerous. See pp. 122-124. Also, in the essays entitled respectively, *Of Labor and Idleness,* and *Of Callings,* Robinson gives sound Christian advice, such as any Catholic or Anglican divine would likewise have given under the same circumstances. See pp. 113-116, and 116-119.

and the dangers inherent in the love of money or its equivalent. For example, Bishop Andrewes, who was a contemporary of Robinson, but a staunch Anglican, expressed views on economic matters which were identical with those entertained by Robinson. According to Andrewes, the Scriptures contained numerous sayings against riches. "By extortion," argued the noble bishop, "and usury we make stones into bread; that is the devil's alchemistry." [21] And as for idleness, he wrote thus: "These idle people, they are against the state of mankind, in paradise, and out of paradise." [22] Andrewes did not have to look far in his studies of the Bible to find the references he needed. He was quoting at the time from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, IV, 28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Robinson and all the Puritans were also familiar with that text. So were the Continental Calvinists and the Catholics.

Robinson's views on political and economic questions were almost identical with those professed by the Calvinist pastors at Leyden. He believed that "the magistrates have no power against the laws, doctrines and religion of Christ, but for the same, if their power be of God, they may use it lawfully and against those who oppose them [the laws, doctrines and religion of Christ]." [24] This was the typical Calvinist attitude, as Robinson fully realized. He was on the best of terms with the members of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, and although he testified that he had never left the Church of England, he did not wish to worship in the English churches, because he objected to the ritual of the Church of England. Thus it happened that when, in 1620, the Pilgrim Fathers went to America, the larger portion of Robinson's congregation remained at Leyden, where many of their descendants are now members of the Reformed Church. Robinson was not interested much in economic problems, and his works deal almost exclusively with matters of religion. One could not have expected those who gave up their homes in England to have been greatly concerned

[21] *The Works of Lancelot Andrewes, sometime Bishop of Winchester,* in *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology,* Vol. V, pp. 21, 500.

[22] L. Andrewes, *Works,* Vol. VI (Oxford, 1854), p. 253.

[24] J. Robinson, *Works,* Vol. III, p. 277.

about economic theories. Very few writers have ever discussed Robinson's views on the lending of money and usury, or on the calling, or on the duty to work hard, for the simple reason that Robinson paid very little attention to them. In short, the Separatists who lived abroad showed in their whole mode of life that they regarded temporal riches as no more than a necessary evil. They were almost the antithesis of the typical capitalists of their age.[25]

Another English Puritan who spent many years in the Netherlands until his death, was Professor William Ames, who, as we saw, was professor at Franeker in Friesland. According to Tawney, his book, *De Conscientia* (*On Conscience*), was the most influential work on social ethics produced in the first half of the seventeenth century by the Puritans.[26] Ames repeated, as we have observed, the view of Calvin concerning the lending of money on interest, and his attitude toward illicit gain made by merchants is naturally the same as that of the Catholics and Protestants alike. He showed that interest on loans where security is given in the form of real estate and rent charged for the use of real estate are in essence the same: "When a person buys a piece of land and accepts for its use a sum of money in the form of rent, his action is legal and just. But when he lends the money to another person who buys the land with it and pays interest on the loan, it is supposed to be a different thing altogether. Just where does the difference reside?" [27] But, like Robinson, he showed so little interest in such matters that his fleeting

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[25] In 1620, Robinson wrote that economic conditions were very bad in Leyden, and that it was almost impossible to get money from anybody. See F. J. Powicke, *John Robinson (1575?-1625)*, (London, 1920), pp. 101-102. Nevertheless, he did not feel impelled to leave for America with the Pilgrim Fathers. He was not greatly interested in material possessions, as is evident from all his actions. In all ecclesiastical and doctrinal matters he said that he conformed wholly to the views of the French Calvinist churches, with some minor exceptions. Moreover, in the Seven Articles of 1617, which expressed officially the creed of his congregation at Leyden, he and his followers accepted every article of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church: "We do (with the Reformed Churches where we live, and also elsewhere) assent wholly." For his writings and sayings not to be found in his *Works*, including the Seven Articles of Faith, see *Old South Leaflets*, published by the directors of the Old South Work, Old South Meeting-house, Boston, No. 142. Here are reproduced several interesting letters and sermons by Robinson.

[26] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, p. 216.

[27] W. Ames, *De conscientia et eius iure vel casibus libri quinque* (1631), Book V, Ch. XLIV.

references were not even noted down by his Dutch biographer. [28]

Inasmuch as an excellent translation of Ames' best known work, *Conscience, With the Power and Cases thereof,* was published in London in the year 1643, I shall reproduce here from it a few pertinent passages. In the twenty-third chapter of Book V the relations between employers and employees are admirably discussed, and it is shown that the employer must treat his help in such manner that they will not suffer want, nor will they be dismissed when they happen to fall ill. The employer must also take care that the servants will attend religious services and lead holy lives. There is nothing in this chapter that could be so construed as to favor capitalism. On the contrary, the whole spirit of the treatment is anti-capitalistic.

Two chapters (XLII and XLIII) are devoted to contracts, in which both parties are exhorted to follow the golden rule established by Christ. The next chapter is entitled, "Of Contracts by Usury." Ames reasons thus about usury and interest: "It is said by the force of the loan itself to exclude that gain which may be received by some other title, as recompense of emergent loss, or the ceasing of gain. The gain of this kind is usually called interest, and is distinguished from usury.[29] This gain is said to be sought, not agreed upon, because not only real usury, in which a contract intercedes, but also mental, which is the intention of getting gain from the loan as a debt, may be contained in this description. Is this kind of usury lawful? Such usury which is commonly practised by usurers and bankers is deservedly condemned of all: because it is a catching art, and no regard of charity or equity being had, lies in waiting for other men's goods. But it cannot be proved solidly by any natural reason that any usury whatsoever is generally and absolutely unlawful."

[28] H. Visscher, *Guilielmus Amesius* (Haarlem, 1894).

[29] See W. J. Ashley, *An Introduction to English Economic History and Theory,* Vol. I (London, 1911), p. 197: "Early mediaeval legists divided the cases *damnum emergens* and *lucrum cessans,* loss arising and gain prevented." Even Thomas Aquinas said that it was proper to pay for the loss incurred by the creditor because of not having his money at his disposal during the time the loan was in effect. When the time for repayment was past, it was legal to pay interest on the loan. In the fifteenth century it became customary to loan money gratuitously for a short period, and then to exact interest at the expiration of the period. See W. J. Ashley, *l.c.,* Vol. II (New York, 1893), p. 402. See also our Ch. I.

Here Ames disaproves of four kinds of unreasonable objections to the taking of interest on loans, and he then continues as follows: "It is confirmed by evident reason that some usury is lawful, because no real difference can be shown between some usury and other contracts which are allowed by all, as for example, one is furnished with the money to buy a farm, from whence he may receive the yearly profit of a hundred pounds. Another desires to have the same farm, but has no ready money. If the first buy the farm, and rents it out for one hundred pounds, no man will deny that he has done what is just and right. But if he give the money to the other to purchase the farm for himself, and shall receive the same sum from him, subjecting himself to the same peril to which he should have exposed himself if he had purchased it, it is the same justice, and besides, there is something added to him which pays usury, by reason of the dominion of that farm which he has obtained with his purchase."

If Luther had used exactly the same words (and he did nearly that as it was), he would have been called reactionary, being presumably the son of a peasant, and having been a former monk. But a Puritan in the seventeenth century must be so depicted as to be even ahead of the advanced thinker, John Calvin. However, turning next to the Scriptures, Ames again shows his conservatism by saying that, although all manner of usury is not condemned forthwith there, the following cases are indeed strictly forbidden: (1) when the borrower is poor; (2) when interest "bites," or "gnaws," that is, when the borrower cannot afford to pay interest; (3) when charity is offended, see Luke VI, 35; and perhaps (4) when the law is political, for usury was forbidden among the Jews, see Deut. XXIII, 19. "The Scriptures seem to imply that some forms of usury are allowed, as in the case of the Jews, who might exact interest from strangers who were not poor. . . . The parable about the talents also seems to indicate that usury was sometimes permissible, for it is said there that some one should have taken his money to the bankers and have received the principal back with interest."

At this point Ames begins to talk in exactly the same vein as the "reactionary peasant mind," Luther. Usury is permitted, he says, only on the following conditions. (1) I take my money to a man whom I can trust, and we agree to become partners, sharing equally

in the profits obtained with the money loaned by myself. (2) The profit will be uncertain, and both parties share equally in the loss, as well as the profit. (3) No poor man is to pay any interest on the money which he borrows. (4) No one may exceed the rates allowed by the civil rulers. (5) If the debtor incur a real loss through no fault of his own, the creditor cannot be expected to lose a part of the principal, and hence the rate of profit when things go very well is to depend partly on this possibility of loss.

Contrasted with the supposedly advanced views of Professor Ames, the distinguished and model Puritan of the first half of the seventeenth century, are the reactionary opinions of Lancelot Andrewes, bishop of Ely, who was not a Puritan. Andrewes resembled the Calvinist Professor Voetius at Utrecht in producing a scholarly treatise in which the lending of money on interest is condemned on scriptural grounds primarily, while the opinions of the Fathers and the leading Protestant writers are also seriously considered. Andrewes surpassed Voetius in drawing upon the medieval writers and the great church councils as well.

Usury, argued Andrewes, is condemned in all its forms by the Bible, so that one is not even permitted to exact interest from the rich. It is legal robbery, as well as terrestrial piracy, and the chemistry of the devil.[30] It is forbidden by the Church Fathers, together with the scholastic writers; and more recently, it has been attacked by (1) Luther, (2) Zwingli, (3) Erasmus, (4) Melanchthon, (5) Camerarius, (6) Musculus, (7) Hemengius, and (8) Aretius. A separate paragraph is devoted to the Helvetic and Genevan school of writers, while Calvin receives more attention than the other eight scholars combined which were just mentioned. The author quotes four times from Calvin's commentary on Ezekiel XVIII, in order to show that Calvin, more than Luther, helped to check the evil of usury.[31] Andrewes, who was not a friend of the Puritans and the Calvinists, nevertheless paid Calvin the tribute of considering him worthy of more space than Luther, Melanchthon and Zwingli combined. This he did in a public disputation held in the University of

[30] L. Andrewes, *De Vsuris, theologica determinatio, habita in pvblica schola theologica Cantabrigiae* (London, 1629), reprinted in *The Works of Lancelot Andrewes,* in the *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology,* Vol. IX (Oxford, 1854), pp. 113-150. The above reference is to pp. 125-127, 140.

[31] L. Andrewes, *l.c.,* pp. 140-141.

Cambridge, thus indicating that he was fully aware of the Calvinist position.[32]

Tawney has indicated that in some of the local meetings of the Puritan clergy and elders, called *classes* (singular *classis*) during the first half of the seventeenth century, usury was deemed a serious crime, but the references are milder than those made by the contemporary Calvinist leaders in the Netherlands. Considering how large a country England was, and how long a period Tawney covered, his scanty source material is most disappointing.[33]

It is made to appear by Tawney that one person, Richard Baxter, when in 1673 he published his *Christian Directory,* turned the whole force of Puritanism into a new channel, while those who followed made the break with the past complete. We are solemnly informed that Calvin and the early Calvinists had desired to create a collective society and a collective political and ecclesiastical organism. The early Puritans also had sought to subordinate individual traits and habits to a general, that is, collective, precept which all had to follow. Then, rather suddenly, about the middle of the seventeenth century, half a dozen writers change the whole course of social ethics and produce a new Puritanism and also a new Calvinism, for Tawney alleges, without offering proof, that the same thing happened in the Dutch Republic, Scotland and America.

Let us first examine what Richard Baxter had to say. He was pastor at Kidderminster, which was not a large and prosperous English town. He explains how on each Thursday evening a number of his neighbors used to come to his home to discuss with him some of the vital social and economic problems. His answers are to be found in his famous book, which is divided into four parts, each covering respectively, as their titles imply, ethics, economics, ecclesiastical problems and political thoughts. The novelty that is said to be found in his work applies partly to the remarkable fact that Baxter, unlike the early Puritans, recognized fully the necessity of justifying the social changes brought about by the expansion of

[32] That he was nevertheless more conservative than Calvin had been, is indicated by the Calvinist professor who taught theology at Geneva in the second half of the seventeenth century, F. Turrettini, *Institutio theologiae elencticae,* Vol. II (New York, 1847), pp. 110, 113.

[33] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.,* pp. 217-221.

trade and industry. Baxter no longer feels obliged to maintain the old dualism which permitted the Christian to do things he knew were wrong. Things that were once considered sinful are declared blameless by Baxter.

However, when Baxter begins to speak for himself, he repeats all the old arguments over and over again. He denies that religion has nothing to do with business, and he reasons that the golden rule must always be applied, no matter how lax the laws may be. This, as we saw in preceding chapters, was the attitude displayed by all the leaders among the early Protestants. The Christian, says Baxter, is prohibited from making money at the expense of his neighbor. He may not make use of monopolies or any other harmful practice in commerce. Exploitation of the poor, fraud and distortion are similarly forbidden. When the law prescribes the maximum rates of profits, he must not exceed those rates. If there are no such rates fixed, he must be content with the minimum amount of gain. In case a client is willing to pay more than he would normally ask for his wares, he ought not to take advantage of this person's generosity. If he is a shrewd merchant and foresees a fall in prices, it is his duty to inform his customers about this so that they will not buy too large supply and suffer the greater loss because of their ignorance. On the other hand, if he knows that prices will go up, he must not hold his goods for a rise in prices. One exception is permitted, namely, in case the owner of an enormous supply of valuable goods (presumably food supplies) can do the community a service by holding them for use by the people at large when these articles shall have become very scarce, and so he will be able to help the whole commonwealth. Baxter probably had in mind the experience of Joseph in Egypt, when he kept all the food supplies in reserve for the seven lean years. Moreover, he seems to talk in exactly the same vein as did Luther in his treatise, *On Trade and Usury*. Just where his great advancement is to be seen, has not been revealed to us as yet.

In contracts signed between buyer and seller, it must be done in such manner that both parties have an equal chance to derive profit therefrom. The taking of interest on loans is not in itself improper for a Christian, except when the debtor does not participate fully in the profit. In case the debtor has been unlucky with the

management of the business on which he borrowed money, the creditor has no right to exact the last farthing. And in rural districts, landlords must be very careful not to oppress their tenants. If one or a few wealthy persons buy all the land in a certain community, they ought not to take advantage of the poor tenants who are now entirely at their mercy. Baxter, as Tawney explains, was especially interested in farming, having been descended from families of yeomen. Here also, concludes Tawney, "the gist of Baxter's analysis of the cases of conscience which arise. . . . is that no man may secure pecuniary gain for himself by injuring his neighbor.[34]

This was Richard Baxter, the "most learned, the most practical, and the most persuasive" of the champions of the new social order.[35] When we compare these comments of his, outlined above in the same order as Tawney has presented them, with the pronouncements of Martin Luther, we have a strong suspicion that Luther had never been studied by Tawney. He certainly was sadly neglected by Max Weber and by many of Weber's disciples. Did not Luther also say that the Christian "is committed by his faith to the acceptance of certain ethical standards, and these standards are as obligatory in the sphere of economic transactions as in any other province of human acticity?" [36]

H. M. Robertson's treatment of Richard Baxter is more satisfactory than that of Tawney. Robertson recognizes the hesitation with which Baxter everywhere regards the art of money-making pure and simple. A few of the quotations given by him are reproduced here, in order to show the reader what were Baxter's own words in some important cases. First, we shall consider the question of the vocation, or calling: "Choose that employment or calling (as far as you have your choice), in which you may be most serviceable to God. Choose not that in which you may be most wealthy or honorable in the world; but that in which you may do most good, and best escape sinning." How pleased would Luther and Calvin have been, had they lived long enough to have seen Baxter produce that statement! This was plain Christianity, and if anyone can read

[34] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, pp. 219-224.
[35] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, p. 219.
[36] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, p. 221.

into those lines any sign of supporting capitalism, he does not know how to reason logically.

Next we analyze Baxter's attitude toward the alleged Puritan theory according to which the most pious person made the most money, or at least, the pious person was more blessed in his daily work with financial gain than the impious man. Baxter's comment runs thus: "Another thinks he is no worldling because he uses no unlawful means, but the labor of his calling to grow rich. The same answer serves to this. The love of wealth for the satisfying of the flesh is unlawful whatever the means be." Significant also are these words: "In trade, in farming, or any other profitable enterprise, we are accustomed to say of a man who has grown rich that he has made use of his time; but when heaven and the communion with God in the way, and a life of holy strength and comfort, and a death full of joy and hope is to be the gain, how cheerfully should time be redeemed for these?" [37]

Werner Sombart has used Baxter to prove a theory which is the exact reverse of that of Weber and Tawney, as far as the period after 1650 is concerned. Quoting also from the *Directory,* he selects such statements as the following: "How little do the wealth and honors of the world concern a soul that is going into another world, and knows not but it may be this night. Then keep the wealth, or take it with you if you can. Labor to feel your greatest wants, which worldly wealth will not supply. You are dead in sin and polluted and captivated by the flesh, and money will sooner increase your bondage than deliver you. Will honest poverty or overloved wealth be sweeter at last? Remember that riches do make it harder for a man to be saved. . . . Remember that riches are no part of your felicity. . . . It is not for nothing that Christ gives so many terrible warnings about riches." [38]

A few other passages from the works of Richard Baxter are given here to show that he was an excellent example of the Christian preacher: "The second intrinsical hindrance of Self-Knowledge is Prosperity, and the flattery that usually attends it. . . . When men prosper in the world, their minds are lifted up with their Estates, and they can hardly believe that they are so ill, while they feel

[37] H. M. Robertson, *l.c.,* pp. 15-19.
[38] W. Sombart, *The Quintessence of Capitalism,* pp. 252-253.

themselves so well, and that so much misery is joined with so much content and pleasure. . . . Their fleshly appetite and sense, which is in them the reigning faculty, tells them they are well and happy. . . . The Devil is therefore willing to reach his servants as full a cup of Prosperity as he can." [39]

In his Counsel to the Sons of Nobility and Magistrates, he wrote: "Your dangers are much greater than those of other men; or else Christ had never so often told us, how hard it is for rich men to be saved." [40] Baxter's farewell sermon to his flock at Kidderminster, which he was not permitted to deliver, is a perfect piece of anti-capitalistic literature, such as one would have expected from him as well as from any other good Christian minister.[41] Besides, there are hundreds upon hundreds of pages of other material which would be sufficient in quantity and quality to provide sources for several monographs, illustrating the religious life of the English people in the second half of the seventeenth century. Mr. Baxter was a genius in giving practical advice. He also preached touching funeral sermons, which must have made many a rich person anxious to part with some of his property, and we may conclude that, if England had produced one minister of his caliber for each of its small towns, with one dozen more for every large town, the capitalists of the time would have been glad to leave the country. Baxter actually took pains to instruct his faithful followers in accepting more readily the official creed of the Church of England, thus indicating that his Puritanism was not much more than pure Christianity.[42]

Luther and Calvin never said anything more destructive to the growth of modern capitalism than the words of Baxter just quoted. This is rather surprising when we consider that Weber and his friends have used Baxter as their main pillar of strength. And Tawney compares his *Directory* with the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. Baxter, the pious minister in a small English town, is taken as the exponent of Puritanism from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century. It is well that he

[39] *The Practical Works of the Late Reverend and Pious Mr. Richard Baxter,* Vol. II (London, 1707), p. 833.

[40] *Works,* Vol. IV (London, 1707), p. 25.

[41] *Works,* IV, pp. 931-944.

[42] *Works,* IV, p. 957.

has received so much attention, for he has performed a very useful duty in showing how faithful a Puritan in his day could be to the teachings of Calvin.

From Baxter we now proceed to even more "advanced thinkers" in the field of economic theory. The first work to be called to our attention, strangely enough, is Bunyan's immortal book, *Pilgrim's Progress.* In spite of its decidedly anti-capitalistic tone, it is nevertheless quoted to show how Puritanism helped to advance the cause of capitalism. Says Weber: "In the description of Christian's attitude after he had realized that he was living in the City of Destruction and he had received the call to take up his pilgrimage in the celestial city, wife and children cling to him, but stopping his ears with his fingers and crying, 'life, eternal life,' he staggers forth across the fields. No refinement could surpass the naive feeling of the tinker who, writing in his prison cell, earned the applause of a believing world, in expressing the emotions of the faithful Puritan, thinking only of his own salvation. It is expressed in the unctuous conversations which he holds with fellow-seekers on the way, in a manner somewhat reminiscent of Gottfried Keller's *Gerechte Kammacher.* Only when he himself is safe, does it occur to him that it would be nice to have his family with him." [43]

After reading this passage from Weber, I am inclined to say of him, "No refinement could surpass the naive feeling of the scholar in his study at Heidelberg who, in expressing the thoughts of the liberal-minded professors, earned the applause of an unbelieving world." Weber should have quoted from the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis. Perhaps he might have proved from those passages which follow here how the Brethren of the Common Life, by whom the pious Thomas was educated, prepared in the Netherlands, where they flourished in the fifteenth century, the way for that stupendous expansion of trade of commerce and industry which gave to the Dutch their huge colonial empire and their enormous merchant marine.

"This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdom of heaven.

"Vanity therefore it is, to seek after perishing riches, and to trust in them.

[43] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic,* p. 107.

"It is vanity to mind only this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come.

"It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy abideth.

"Endeavor therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things, and to turn thyself to the invisible." [44]

We are now ready to view with considerable interest the change from the "iron collectivism, . . . the remorseless and violent rigors practised in Calvin's Geneva. . . . to the important rejection of all traditional restrictions on economic enterprise which was the temper of the English business world after the Civil War." Thus did Tawney introduce this remarkable metamorphosis in Puritanism.[45] His readers are given to understand that those ethical principles which proved to be an enemy of capitalism became afterward the best friend capitalism ever had.

We shall soon meet a generation of so-called Puritans who saw divine favor in the successes they attained in all sorts of business enterprises. As their wealth increased, so did their hope of eternal salvation. Writers of pamphlets make their appearance who claim that their brethren in the faith are now worse than the Catholics in oppressing the poor, and in charging interest on loans. If usury were wrong, they argued, why should widows, orphans and unemployables be permitted to make use of it? The government itself turned to mercantilism, probably in imitation of Colbert; and the Navigation Acts, passed to check the competition of the Dutch, together with many other regulations intended to strengthen the local industries, ushered in a new age. There can be no doubt about all those things. There were some Puritans who did note that as long as they were virtuous and industrious, their work was of a better quality. There were also some Puritans who, in a moment of laxity, drove hard bargains with their clients. So were there some Catholics and some Lutherans who did the very same things.

It is my opinion, however, that even in the period from 1675 to 1725, the essential character of Puritanism remained the same, for the acts of the English government and the English merchants in general cannot be said to reflect Puritanism in that period, inasmuch

[44] *L.c.*, Book I, Ch. I.
[45] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, p. 226.

as Puritanism in England was being destroyed by various forces, including the restored state church and the new capitalistic spirit. At this point I shall present one more illustration of Puritan thought in this half century of declining Puritanism. The illustration is provided by one of the Puritans selected by Max Weber from the motley collection of writings, entitled *Works of the Puritan Divines,* which include some of the compositions by Baxter and Bunyan mentioned above. How this person, Matthew Henry, could be used to show that Puritanism assisted the development of capitalism in England, is somewhat hard to understand, for the author was born as late as 1662. He was minister of the Presbyterian Church in Chester from 1687 to 1712, hence he will do very well as an example of a Puritan writer, but not as an illustration of the influence of Puritanism upon the rise of modern capitalism.

Matthew Henry was indeed as anti-capitalistic a minister as could be found anywhere in his age. About the time he was ordained he wrote down some of his reflections about his character: "I think I can say with confidence that I do not design to take up the ministry as a trade to live by, or to enrich myself, out of the greediness of filthy lucre." [46] When, on March 8, 1713, he was robbed in London, he wrote in his *Journal*: "See the vanity of worldly wealth; how soon we may be stripped of it. How loose, therefore, we should sit to it." [47]

Henry's attitude toward the calling and the duty to work industriously, is beautifully and clearly demonstrated in his admirable treatise, *Directions for Daily Communion with God*: "Whatever your employments be, in country-business, city-business, or sea-business, or only in the business of the house, go about them in the fear of God, depending upon Him to make them comfortable and successful, and to prosper the work of your hands unto you. And hereby you will arm yourselves against the many temptations you are compassed about with in your worldly business; by waiting on God you will be freed from the care and cumber which attends much serving, will have your minds raised above the little things of sense and time, will be serving God when you are most busy about the

[46] *Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Matthew Henry* by the Rev. J. Hamilton, in *Matthew Henry's Choice Works,* ed. J. Hamilton (New York, 1848), p. 28.
[47] *Choice Works,* p. 39.

world, and will have God in your hearts when your hands are full of the world." [48]

One of the most illuminating expositions of Puritan ethics was presented by William Perkins, whose *Works,* published in three volumes at Cambridge, sound as if they could very well be used to show how very advanced the Puritans were about the year 1600. They are indeed more scholarly and advanced than Baxter's *Directory,* although Tawney does not mention him at all, and Robertson but once, and then in connection with three other names, failing to mention any of his works or ideas. It certainly is remarkable that a man like Perkins, who officiated as minister at the University of Cambridge during the period when this university was dominated by Calvinist theology (about 1580-1610), should have been so singularly neglected by authors, even including Max Weber, who sought to indicate what were the Puritan teachings on the following subjects: the duty to work hard, the necessity of saving money, the use of wealth, the need of helping the poor, the permission to acquire riches, etc. Perkins was an expert in this field, and he left explicit directions as to how much one might spend on clothes, recreations and games, as we shall observe presently. As for his influence, one quotation from an English authority on Puritan Preaching in England will show how important Perkins really was: "In the case of a man at once so learned as a scholar, so able as a preacher, and so widely influential as a spiritual force, as William Perkins, the preacher of today will be interested in knowing what were his methods and what his ideals." [49] His scholarly exposition of the doctrine of predestination alone will entitle him to a high rank among the true representatives of the Puritan mind.[50]

Perkins provides an excellent illustration of the manner in which a typical Puritan developed the theory that God would be certain to help those who were virtuous: "He that believes in God, and takes God for his God, may assure himself of salvation, and of a happy deliverance in all dangers and necessities. When God threatened a plague upon Israel for their idolatry, good King

[48] *Choice Works,* p. 121.

[49] J. Brown, *Puritan Preaching in England* (London, 1900), p. 72.

[50] *A Christian and Plaine Treatise of the Manner and Order of Predestination and of the Largeness of God's Grace,* in his *Workes,* Vol. II (Cambridge, 1609), pp. 689-730.

Josia humbled himself before the Lord his God: and he was safe all his days. And so King Hezekiah, when King Senacherib, the king of Ashur, offered to invade Judah, trusted likewise in the Lord, and prayed unto Him, and was delivered: Whereby we see if a man puts his whole trust in God, he shall have security and quietness, as Jehosaphat said to the men of Judah."

Turning now to the field of practical application, Perkins continued thus: "Does God rain upon the earth? Then we may well consider why the land is so often plagued with unreasonable rain; it is no doubt for our disobedience, as we have heard, Lev. XXVI, 19; and the contempt of the Word, among other sins, is one main cause of this judgment. Now if we would either remove, or prevent this plague at any time, we must turn unto the Lord and repent of our sins, for thereto we are called by this judgment, Amos IV, 7. And if we do turn, then will the Lord send generous rain upon our land, but if we will not turn, we shall have another rain, the rain of Sodom and Gomorra." [51]

Another illustration of the theory of divine protection for the virtuous is seen in the writings of Francis Higginson, who sailed from England to America on the "Talbot" shortly before the departure of the "Mayflower." He wrote: "We had a pious and Christian-like passage; for I suppose passengers shall seldom find a company of more religious, honest and kind seamen than we had. We constantly served God morning and evening by reading and expounding a chapter, singing and prayer. And the Sabbath was solemnly kept by adding to the former, preaching twice and catechising. And in our great need we kept two solemn fasts, and found a gracious effect. Let all that love and use fasting and praying take notice that it is as prevailable by sea as by land, wheresoever it is faithfully performed. Besides, the shipmaster and his company set their eight and twelve o'clock watches with singing a psalm and prayer that was not read out of a book. This I write not for boasting and flattery; but for the benefit of those that have a mind to come to New England hereafter, that if they look for and desire to have as prosperous a voyage as we had, they may use the same means to attain the same."

The party settled at Salem, and presently Higginson was able to

[51] W. Perkins, *Workes,* Vol. III, pp. 130, 100.

send this report: "We that are settled at Salem make what haste we can to build, so that within a short time we shall have a fair town. We have great ordinance whereof we doubt not but to fortify ourselves in short time, to keep out a potent adversary. But that which is our greatest comfort and means of defense above all others is, that we have here the true religion and holy ordinances of almighty God among us. Thanks be to God, we have plenty of preaching and diligent catechising, with strict and careful exercise of good and commendable orders to bring our people to Christian conversation, which whilst we do we doubt not but God will be with us, and so Romans VIII, 31: 'What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" [52]

Tawney, though he gives no references whatever in making known the Puritan theory about reward for virtue and punishment for sin, claims that in the eyes of the Puritan of the end of the seventeenth century, poverty is not "a misfortune to be pitied and relieved, but a moral failing to be condemned, and . . . riches not an object of suspicion . . . but the blessing which rewards the triumph of energy and will." [53] If this rash statement could be proved, it would indeed be deserving of careful study. That numerous writers in all Christian churches were familiar with the connection between slothfulness and poverty, between industry and financial gain, and between honesty and a good reputation, cannot be gainsaid. Furthermore, we must examine the verdict by Milton, who even went so far as to claim that God had shown His favors first to the English: "God was revealing himself more fully to His servants, and as His manner is, first to His Englishmen." [54] But is Milton not a bit biased here?

Professor A. A. van Schelven, who has devoted twenty-five years to the study of Calvinism and Puritanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has an observation which deserves to be translated

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[52] *A Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston, Mass., 1769), pp. 46-47; see also Th. W. Higginson, *Life of Francis Higginson* (New York, 1891), Ch. VI.

[53] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, p. 230.

[54] *The Prose Works of John Milton,* ed. J. A. St. John, Vol. II (London, 1888), p. 91. Little more need be said about Milton here, considering his shocking views about divorce, from the Puritan standpoint.

here: "This word, *Innerweltliche Askese* [inner-wordly asceticism] which is a most unfortunate expression [invented by Weber], does not apply to Calvin at all. What should have been the word is *Weltabgewandt* (hostile to the things of this world) . . . After having analyzed the thoughts of Calvin, we turn to the confessional period of the seventeenth century. And in the first place, to France, Calvin's native country. As far as I have been able to judge, French Calvinism adopted a standpoint which conformed absolutely to that of the Reformer himself, as I have just depicted it. Here we find just as little of this alleged desire to measure the assurance of eternal salvation by the amount of success attained in one's worldly calling. Up to the last writers on dogma in France and Switzerland among the Calvinists, Ben. Pictet, *La théologie Chrétienne et la science du salut,* Vol. II (Geneva, 1708), we find the same attitude as that displayed by Calvin. This writer presents the following signs upon which the believer may depend for his salvation: the realization of the nature of sin, definite struggling with the sins that most easily beset us, love for the Savior, recognition of the kingship of Christ, the confession of His name, contempt of the things of this world, the elevation of our hearts to the heavenly realm, love for one's enemies, the enjoyment in reading God's Word and the meditation upon the same; these, but not one word about the success attained in one's calling, that is, vocation.

"Nowhere among the French-speaking Calvinists is there any definite evidence of this methodical search for the signs of salvation in the amount of profit made in one's calling, nowhere this sanctification of the worldly calling of which the studies of Max Weber and Troeltsch have so much to say, and upon which the whole thesis of the Heidelberg school rests. . . . And as for Puritanism, I cannot share the conclusions reached by the Heidelberg school, because they are based upon an inadequate study of the sources. I would agree with Goeters and Karl Holl in that Puritanism was fundamentally a mode of life which agreed fully with the Calvinist creed, and which manifested itself in an attempt to live a holy life, to become as nearly perfect as was humanly possible. The difference between Calvinism and Puritanism is no doubt the result of the national character of the English people of

the seventeenth century. . . . I realize that in my process of reasoning I have adopted a standpoint diametrically opposed to Max Weber." [55]

There is no doubt much truth in the statement from the pen of another authority on Calvinism and Puritanism which reads thus: "Among the Puritans there were not a few men and women who added to purity of morals and the happiness of domestic affections, guarded as sacred, the best graces of culture and refinement." [56] The old legend about the asceticism of the Puritans is of course hopelessly out of date by this time. Worldly goods were not evil in themselves. Art and literature, learning and refinement were to be prized, as even the author of the *Imitation of Christ* intimated. The point was simply this, How could the good Christian reserve enough of his time and attention for the kingdom of God? Christ had said, "Seek first the kingdom [of God], and all these things shall be added unto you."

William Perkins, who was well known by the Calvinists in the Netherlands (so that Professor Van Schelven can quote from a Dutch edition of 1662 of one of his works) shows how well he understood this problem: "If we happen to have inherited much property, we are to enjoy these in good conscience, as blessings and gifts of God." On the other hand, the believer must be willing at all times to give up all of his possessions, for the sake of his spiritual advancement. "Thus one is obliged to relinquish the things that are most dear to him, since he has determined in his heart to give them up entirely. . . . There is need of moderation in all things, of soberness, in deciding whether one should wear one, two or three collars. The Scriptures do not give specific instructions on this subject, hence we must follow the example of the most sober-minded and the most modest in our social class and of about the same age as ours." As far as the question of games and excursions are concerned, they are certainly permitted and often necessary for relaxation. Two conditions, however, are to be observed: (1) the amount of time consumed, and (2) the degree of emotion spent on them.

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[55] A. A. van Schelven, *Historisch onderzoek naar den levensstijl van het Calvinisme*, pp. 80-91, *passim*.

[56] E. Dowden, *Puritan and Anglican* (London, 1900), pp. 21, 25.

For it must be remembered that we may not set our whole heart upon worldly pleasures.[57]

The interesting treatise, from which Professor A. A. van Schelven quoted, *Of the Cases of Conscience,* is a useful mine of information about the manner in which the typical Puritan regarded the social and economic problems of the day. The fourth chapter of the third book deserves further analysis here, as it deals exclusively with "Temperance in the Use of Riches."

The question which Perkins asks at the opening of the chapter is this, "How far a man may, with good conscience, proceed in the desiring and seeking of riches." The answer is in part as follows: "We must consider that riches and goods are of two sorts: some are necessary, and some are more than necessary, which the Scripture calls *Abundance.* Goods and riches are in two ways necessary, to nature, or to the person of man. Goods necessary to nature are those without which nature and life cannot be well preserved; and these are most needful. Necessary in respect to a man's person are those goods without which a man's state, condition and dignity wherein he is, cannot be preserved. . . . Things and goods are to be judged necessary and sufficient, not by the affection of the covetous man, which is insatiable, but by two other things: the judgment of wise and godly men, and the example of sober and frugal persons. We must not make one measure of sufficiency of goods necessary for all persons; for it varies, according to the diverse conditions of persons, and according to time and place. More things are necessary to a public person than to a private; and more to him that has a charge than to a single man. . . .

"We ourselves do often err in judgment, in the determining of things necessary and sufficient for ourselves; and therefore, when men seek things competent and necessary, they must always pray to God, to give them that which He knows in His wisdom to be meet and necessary. . . . Man may with good conscience desire and seek for goods necessary, whether for nature or for his person, according to the former rules; but he may not desire and seek for goods more than necessary, for if he does, he sins. The reasons for this answer are these. First, Deut. XVII, 16, 17. The command-

[57] A. A. van Schelven, *Hist. ond.,* pp. 87-88. For the original, see W. Perkins, *Workes,* II, pp. 145-165.

ment is given to the King, that has most need of abundance, that he should not multiply his horses, or his silver or his gold. That which the king may not do, the subjects ought much less to do; and therefore they are not to multiply their goods. . . . Secondly, the seeking of abundance is a hazard to the salvation of the soul, by reason of man's corruption. . . . Thirdly, the seeking of abundance is a fruit of disbelief in the providence of God. . . . Now I shall answer the objections of the covetous. First, good things are to be sought for; abundance is a good thing, and a blessing of God. Answer: Good things are of two sorts. Some are simply good, that is to say, good in themselves and to us, as remission of sins, holiness, righteousness, and life everlasting in the kingdom of heaven; these we may desire and seek for. Some again are good only in part, which though they be good in themselves, yet are not always good to us. Of this kind is abundance of riches, and store of wealth more than necessary for nature and person. For which cause, riches in abundance are as a knife in the hands of a child, likely to hurt, if not taken away." Perkins even goes so far as to argue that one must not pile up riches, in order to be able to distribute them in the form of alms: "I answer: we may not do evil that good may come thereof. . . . The end of a man's calling is not to gather riches for himself, for his family, for the poor; but to serve God in the serving of man, and in the seeking the good of all men: and to this end men must apply their lives and labours." Perkins also disapproves of the idea that one should imitate the busy ant, and work so hard all the time. He argues that the ant, after all, gathers supplies that are strictly necessary for a limited period. "This doctrine serves to direct and inform almost all the world to beat down the wicked practice of the usurer, and teach everyone of us to moderate our care in things pertaining to this life."

If God, however, should decide to bestow upon us great wealth, as he did in the case of Abraham and Joseph of Arimathea, when we neither desire it nor seek it, we may use it as God's stewards. Nevertheless, even then we must remember that our Saviour said, "It is a hard thing for him that has riches to enter the kingdom of God." Furthermore, we are enjoined to forsake all and become Christ's disciples. Thirdly, riches are called unrighteous, Luke XVI, 9, "Make ye friends of unrighteousness, Mammon." Perkins con-

tinues at great length, urging his auditors and readers to concentrate their minds as far as is humanly possible, upon spiritual things.

It is worth noting in this connection that Professor Van Schelven, as well as E. Beins, is of the opinion that the Weberian thesis is sound when applied to the Puritans in England. We observe the order of the subjects Van Schelven mentioned as discussed by Perkins, and the quotations he presented from the treatise, *Of the Cases of Conscience*. Even where Perkins admits that one may in certain cases enjoy the use of great wealth, he deliberately inserts these texts, "Woe be to you that are rich" (Luke VI, 24); and "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew V, 3). In my opinion there could be no better example given of an anti-capitalistic spirit than that revealed by William Perkins. He made it clear in every point that at no time was a Christian permitted to seek greater riches than he needed for himself and his family only. Unlike Thomas Aquinas and Catholic scholars generally, who are held up as reactionary, Perkins did not say that it was proper to accumulate wealth in order to give some of it away to the poor. That has been the argument in favor of the philanthropists, but it did not appeal to Perkins, who has been avoided completely by Tawney and other followers of Weber for a very good reason. Perkins happens to prove that there must have been some Puritans at least who were a real hindrance to the development of capitalism. And Perkins was by no means an obscure personage. On the contrary, he was placed in the most important center of Puritan teaching, the University of Cambridge, and his influence was such, as we saw, that his treatise was published and read in the Dutch Republic in the Dutch language.

Another English Puritan whose works were sedulously studied by the Dutch Calvinists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was Lewis Bayley, who devoted a book to the Practice and Exercise of Godly Salvation. This work appeared in Dutch translation at Utrecht in the year 1686. The quotation given by Professor Van Schelven runs thus: "Do not concentrate your thoughts upon worldly things to any greater degree than is salutary for your mind, in accordance with your position in society. . . Do not turn recreation or pleasure into a daily habit. . . . Use only as many pleasures as are required for the state of your mind and body, in order that

you may serve God all the more readily and devote yourself to your daily work." [58]

As commerce and industry grew by leaps and bounds, many of the faithful were naturally oblivious of the wholesome advice given by the earlier generations of Puritans. Professors and pastors lamented the manner in which trade took the place of religion in the hearts of many. All the evils which caused Luther to write his treatise, *On Trade and Usury,* as early as 1524, now descended upon England, which, as Tawney has pointed out, was much slower to develop economically than Italy, or Germany, or the Netherlands. Tawney also took care to show that Milton was a bit too enthusiastic about the way the Lord had favored the English in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Furthermore, he indicates clearly how capitalism finally made inroads upon the pristine purity of the Calvinist faith in England, and he observes in a footnote that his account is largely based upon that of Weber.[59]

One of the most popular writers in England during the first half of the seventeenth century was Jeremy Taylor, who is not called a Puritan, but whose famous work, *The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living,* will illustrate a fact which must have become evident to the reader, namely, that the attitude displayed by the leading Puritans toward the art of money-making and toward all "worldly" things was merely a manifestation of religious zeal, and as such, distinctly anti-capitalistic. On the very first page of Taylor's booklet there appears this statement, which, if it had come from the pen of a Calvinist, or a typical Puritan, would have been distorted so as to show that the writer was obliged to spend all his time looking for signs of his election, and that he must needs do everything for the glory of God. Such an attitude was simply good Christianity, and an Anglican did as readily use this language as a Calvinist: "And therefore, as every man is wholly God's own portion by the title of Creation; so all our labors and care, all our powers and faculties, must be wholly employed in the service of God, even all the days of our life: that, this life being ended, we may live with Him for ever."

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[58] A. A. van Schelven, *Hist. ond.,* p. 88. The title of the book was in Latin, *Praxis Pietatis.*

[59] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.,* p. 321, note 74.

Jeremy Taylor also adopts the same spirit of Christian charity in the matter of business dealings as did every good Puritan or Calvinist. In Chapter III, Section III, he writes thus: "The sum of all this is in these words of St. Paul, 'Let no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of such.' And our blessed Saviour, in enumerating the duties of justice, besides the Commandment of 'Do not steal,' adds, 'Defraud not,' forbidding the tacit and secret theft of abusing our brother in civil contracts."

A famous Puritan contemporary of Jeremy Taylor was William Prynne, about whom more was written in the pamphlets of the time (1630-1655) than about anyone else in England with the exception of King Charles I and Oliver Cromwell. Although he was a prolific writer and a very influential person in England when Puritanism was at the height of its power, the reader will not be surprised to learn that neither R. H. Tawney nor H. M. Robertson mentions him at all, while Max Weber apparently knew nothing about him worth recording. Nevertheless, he is discussed in all our textbooks of English history, and his views on economic matters, however hard to trace, must be examined, if one is to understand what Puritanism was. Inasmuch as he devoted an extensive treatise to the doctrine of predestination, he showed his religious affiliations very clearly.[60]

One of Prynne's most interesting works is a pamphlet of 337 pages entitled, *The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, both to Regall Monarchy, and Civill Unity* (London, 1641). He tried to prove in this pamphlet that every archbishop of Canterbury and of York since the early Middle Ages had been a bad person in at least some respects simply because he was an archbishop. Furthermore, the bishops had for the most part been enemies of the realm. Their attachment to worldly pomp and ceremony, their love of

[60] The list of pamphlets written by Prynne fills more than twelve pages in the admirable monograph by E. W. Kirby, *William Prynne A Study in Puritanism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), pp. 194-206. The list of pamphlets written about him fills over seven pages. The pamphlet of Prynne on predestination is entitled, *Church of England's Old Antithesis to the New Arminianism* (1629). It tells about the power of the Calvinist theology at Cambridge University, which is an added reason why the reader is urged to consider the views of William Perkins, mentioned above, who at the time (about 1595) was one of the leading Puritans at Cambridge.

filthy lucre, their immersion in mundane affairs, their reluctance to preach sermons, and their conspiracy with the enemies of England were a disgrace to the commonwealth, so he argued. In the dedicatory epistle he states that the bishops have been the obstacles to "the propagation of religion, the frequent and sincere preaching of the Gospel, the powerful practice of true piety, the salvation of men's souls, and the tranquility of our Church and State." Even Matthew Parker, the archbishop of Canterbury in the opening years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, although he preached frequently and studied hard, was nevertheless a disappointment to Prynne, because he was "over-Pontificall and Princely in his buildings, feasts, household stuff and apparel."

Prynne next discusses the rise of Puritanism in England (p. 158), showing that the leaders of the new party "would allow of nothing but what was taken out of the Scriptures, and out of a desire of reformation. . . . using all diligence to have the Church of England reformed in every point, according to the Rule of the Church of Geneva." How they were persecuted by the queen, upon the advice of the archbishop, is emphasized fully. Even George Abbot, who in the years 1611-1613 strongly supported the Orthodox Calvinists in their religious views, receives censure, since he was "over-stately to his fellow-brethren and wasted much time shooting deer." Among the wicked archbishops of York there was one (John Kerap), who incurred the displeasure of Henry VI. Just as bad was the bishop of Winchester, who was at the same time a cardinal. These two prelates offended Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, regent for the king, who drew up a document of twenty-four articles, in which he attacked the two men. The cardinal was criticized in the fifth article for having loaned money to the king, who had to give his jewels as security and incurred a great loss. Articles seven, eight and nine are devoted to other loans made by the archbishop to the king. A particularly severe attack on the way in which the Sabbath is desecrated by the bishops is followed by a condemnation of dancing, all of which goes to show that Prynne was a real Puritan.

"O immortal God! What path has righteousness with unrighteousness? What fellowship has light with darkness? What agreement has Christ with Belial? What has the merriment of the

flesh to do with the gladness of the spirit?" Now the author, who is nearing the end of his work, turns from the wicked bishops of Winchester to those of Durham and Lincoln, to "see whether they have been better qualified than these their brethren." He can find little good in them, and of the present incumbent of the episcopal office at Lincoln, he says that the bishop is too much interested in secular affairs, and he is too proud. Christ advised His followers to serve the humblest among them, and Peter spoke in the same vein. "To join the power of administering the republic with the priesthood, is all one as to knit those things which cannot be coupled by any conjunction. . . . Contemplation is the end of priesthood. . . . The soul which is to become the receptacle of God, ought to be free from all affection: he had need of vacation from secular employments, who with the study of philosophy is employed in sacred things." That is why Prynne objected to the shooting of deer by the archbishop of Canterbury. He ends his book with a reference to St. Cyprian, who bitterly complained about a member of the clergy for leaving the altar and the church, and attending to temporal affairs. "If the present bishop of Lincoln had well considered this, it would have struck him dumb, and it would have made him ashamed so much as once to open his mouth in defence of our prelates usurping or exercising temporal jurisdiction, and meddling in temporal affairs, in which he himself heretofore has been too conversant, far more than this clerk, who was a bare overseer of another man's will."

Prynne, who spent years in close confinement and imprisonment because of his devotion to the principles of Puritanism, showed in both his writings and his actions that he sought another country, the kingdom of the spirit. All those who sought that country were hostile to the spirit of capitalism. They objected to the playing of games on Sunday, to dancing at any time, to immoderate frivolity, and to all forms of what they considered worldliness, which included the attempt to make more money than was absolutely necessary. I am convinced that whenever one makes a thorough study of the Puritans, he will inevitably come to the conclusion that Puritanism was more detrimental to either capitalism itself or the spirit of capitalism than Anglicanism or Catholicism.

Another excellent illustration of the anti-capitalistic spirit of

English Puritanism is seen in the works of Jeremy Burroughs, an influential leader of the Puritans in the time of Prynne. He has thus far been completely neglected by the Weberian school in England and even by H. M. Robertson, who studied in the same college in the University of Cambridge where Burroughs was educated from 1617 to 1624. But that does not diminish his importance in the development of Puritanism. He left Cambridge because he refused to conform to the rites and government of the Church of England, and from 1637 to 1641 he was pastor of the Congregational church in the Dutch city of Rotterdam. When news reached him of the victory of the Puritans in his native England, he rejoiced at the turn of events and hastened back to the circle of his friends at home.

The rejoicing of Burroughs found active expression in a sermon preached before the House of Commons on September 7, 1641, which sermon was published at London in the same year "by Order of the said House." In this sermon the preacher refers frequently to the persecutions suffered by the Puritans under Laud between 1629 and 1640, and he is glad to know that the "superstitious innovations" have ceased to poison the minds of the English people (p. 19). He makes it clear that the Puritans have not risen against the King but against the "Antichristian party" (p. 23-24). This is the year of wonders, the *mirabilis annus*: "We now see the goats stand on the left hand and the sheep on the right; we never in our days nor our forefathers before us, ever saw the day of judgment so resembled in our nation. . . . Oh how glad have they been if they had got any story of a Puritan to tell at Court to make merry with . . . and to cast an *odium* upon the Puritans."

Burroughs was a voluminous writer, and as pastor of the Congregational church at Stepney, and later, at Cripplegate in London, he preached powerful sermons, many of which were published after his death by six of his admirers. Among them are those collected under the title of *The Saints Happiness,* published in 1660, and which, according to the title-page, were the last he had preached. The first 89 pages are devoted to the blessings which Christ has in store for the "poor in spirit." There are some poor people, says Burroughs, who are poor because of their own fault; they have brought poverty upon themselves "by their idleness, by their wickedness, by their prodigality, by misspending what they have

when they are young and have time to lay up something against charge come upon them, spend it all presently, and so they and their families are likely to perish through poverty." Those are not the poor whom Christ blesses (p. 27).

However, there are others who are poor through no fault of their own. For them Burroughs sees much comfort in the words of Christ. (1) The poor have souls which are just as precious as those of the rich. (2) The poor have as free access to God as the greatest potentates. (3) You are just as near, and in some respects you are nearer than the great ones in this world to eternal bliss; for your temptations are not so great as are theirs. (4) You poor have less to account for in the last day. (5) The Lord has revealed in the Scriptures that He has chosen the poor in this world, see James II, 6: "The Lord hath chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith." (6) Christ sends forth His servants to call in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind; see Matthew XI, 5: "To the poor is the Gospel preached." (7) The inward calling to life eternal is possessed by very few outside the company of the poor, see I Cor. I, 26. (8) The Lord will have as much regard for you, if you obey the call, as for an emperor.

Especially enlightening are two treatises by Burroughs which were published in London in 1656, under the title of *Two Treatises of Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs. The First, Of Earthly-Mindedness. . . . The Second Treatise, Of Conversing in Heaven, and Walking with God.* The first composition throws much light on the Puritan ethics of the seventeenth century, for it shows how one ought to spend his life here upon the earth in the midst of material possessions. The author mentions nine signs of being too much interested in earthly things. The first is the desire to have "such and such things as others have." The second is revealed when "the cream and choice of the thoughts of men and women are busied about earthly things," for then "they mind earthly things in a sinful manner." The third sign is seen in one "whose whole heart cleaves to the earth," and the fourth in one "whose heart is filled with distracting cares about the earth." The fifth sign is shown by him who "eagerly and greedily works with the strongest intention about these things." The sixth sign appears when a man or a woman "shall seek any earthly thing for itself and not in subordination to some higher good." The sev-

enth sign means being earthly even in the performance of spiritual duties.

We are particularly interested in the eighth sign mentioned by Burroughs, for he shows how well he is aware of the psychology of the man of the world. The latter enjoys himself in his own element and he resembles the fish in the water that does not get tired of swimming. He does not complain about his heavy duties in getting rich in this world, nor will he notice any symptoms of fatigue in his toil, for his whole heart is in his business, and his thoughts remain with it even at night. But when such men are to attend the spiritual tasks, the least difficulty discourages them completely. "In the business of the world they can follow it, from morning to night they are never tired, they can work (as we say sometimes of men) like a horse and yet never out of breath." The man who is of an earthly mind shows a very different attitude when he must do something for his spirit or soul: "But let him take in hand a spiritual work, and he will lay it aside before it be half done, he will seldom bring to perfection any spiritual work, why? because he has no mind to it."

How different is the man described in the second treatise, he who knows how to walk with God! Does he seek the sign of divine favor in the way he prospers in his business, as Weber and his English and American admirers have described him? Not at all. On the contrary, he has his heart set upon spiritual symptoms. "The Lord is pleased to send His Holy Spirit to guide the soul to Himself, and to guide it in walking with Himself. In Rom. VIII it is said, 'All that are the sons of God are led by the spirit of God.' As a father when he walks with the child he gives him his hand and leads along the child with himself: when any comes to be a child of God, God puts forth His hand and leads him, and so they walk together." This signifies that one will depend upon God to take care of his needs. And when he is at work in the daytime, he has no reason for being concerned when adversities befall him: "A man that walks with God, he loves to be much retired from the world. It is true, he must follow his occasions in the world, he does that in obedience unto God, but except he may have his retired times he knows not how to live." We have now reached p. 312 in this interesting book by Burroughs, and still we see him expressing

exactly the kind of sentiments one would have expected of a true Puritan, regardless of whether he lived in the sixteenth or the seventeenth century.

The reader will have surmised that one could quote from almost any Puritan writer to prove a certain opinion about the Puritan mode of life. We shall now follow Weber and his disciples in analyzing those examples of Puritan writings which they chose to select from a multitude of sources. It strikes us as somewhat unfortunate that English and American writers should have felt obliged to reproduce the meagre findings of the Heidelberg school without adding at least ten times more to these. The first writer to engage our attention at this point is Richard Steele, the author of a work entitled, *The Trademan's Calling, being a Discourse concerning the Nature, Necessity, Choice, etc., of a Calling in General,* published in 1684. He wrote thus: "God calls every man and woman to serve Him in some particular employment in this world, both for their own and the common good. . . . The great Governor of the world has appointed every man his proper post and province, and let him be never so active out of his sphere, he will be at a great loss, if he do not keep his own vineyard and mind his own business." [61]

Only those who do not understand medieval history could quote such a statement to show the influence of the rising trade upon the Puritan mind. What Steele says here is decidedly medieval and conservative. Far more advanced was Thomas Aquinas when he argued that it was not always necessary to remain in the calling or the social order in which a person found himself at the beginning. And as for the thought that God had put each person in his special calling, this is merely a repetition of what St. Paul had said in the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Even Professor Van Schelven, probably because he was a Calvinist and because the necessary books for studying Puritanism were not accessible to him, did not detect this fundamental weakness in the reasoning of Weber and his English disciples. When Luther is accused of having been reactionary, we are often informed that he could not see why anyone might eventually change his calling or his station in society, but when Steele says exactly the same thing in the second half of

[61] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.,* p. 240.

the seventeenth century, he is hailed as a prophet of enlightenment, or as one of the first Puritans to yield to the new spirit of capitalism. Where does one get the idea that the Puritans were the first to recognize the workings of Divine Providence? Have we not noted it before in some of the earlier chapters in the present work? Moreover, Steele's attack upon monasticism is more unreasonable than that of Luther. Living in a better environment than did Luther, he should have known better, for Luther had seen some of the abuses in the monasteries that had largely disappeared in Steele's time.

Next follows the Weberian discussion of Puritan asceticism. Labor, argued the Puritan, is not punishment for the sin of Adam, but rather, a kind of ascetic discipline, so rigorous that it surpasses the most severe discipline of any monastic order. Only in this new form of asceticism, hard work, can the soul find health. "Be wholly taken up," said Baxter in his *Directory,* "in diligent business of your lawful callings, when you are not engaged in the more immediate service of God." And Thomas Adams is quoted by Weber where he says, "He confines himself to the circle of his own affairs and thrusts not his fingers in needless fires . . . He sees the falseness of the world and therefore learns to trust himself ever, others so far as not to be damaged by their disappointments." And Matthew Henry remarks, "Those that are prodigal of their time despise their own souls." (The writer felt that there should be no idle leisure.) [62]

Again it is not clear what the Weberian school is trying to prove. It may be that they do not know how to use their ammunition, for the effect of their shooting is very feeble. Or perhaps the best work is still to come. One Puritan (Baxter again) has made a discovery of some moment when he finds that a person should not spend much of his time in meditation: "God has commanded you some way or other to labor for your daily bread." Even the rich should work, as Steele says: "The standing pool is prone to putrifaction; and it were better to beat down the body and to keep it in subjection by a laborious calling than through luxury to become a cast-away." Once more, I would surmise that some of the Puritans had read Luther or one of the medieval writers. We could also quote nearly everyone of the leading Church Fathers to show how Puritanism worked

[62] M. Weber, *l.c.,* pp. 96, 168; R. H. Tawney, *l.c.,* p. 242.

in their time, for their reasoning is often identical with that of Steele.

Sentiments reminiscent of the *Imitation of Christ* are quoted next, in order to indicate that the typical Puritan of the end of the seventeenth century had become radically different from the foregoing generations. He now urges his friends not to bestow excessive devotion upon relatives and acquaintances: "It is an irrational act, and therefore not fit for a rational creature, to love one farther than reason will allow us. . . . It very often takes up men's minds so as to hinder their love to God." This philosophy is called the new utilitarianism.

We might pause here a moment and examine some of the sayings in the *Imitation of Christ,* the most widely read book ever written in Europe, and so popular in England that John Wesley saw fit to issue a new English translation of it: "My son, if you rest your peace on any person, because you have formed a high opinion of him, and because you are in daily familiar intercourse with him, you will become entangled and unstable. . . . Your regard for your friend ought to be grounded in Me; and for My sake is he to be beloved. . . . My son, you ought with all diligence to endeavor that in every place and in every external action or occupation, you may be inwardly free and thoroughly master of yourself; and that all things are under you, and not you under them. . . . Rather should you be as a free man and a true Hebrew, passing over into the lot and freedom of the sons of God. For they, standing upon the things present, contemplate things eternal. With the left eye they look on transitory things, and with the right eye on the things of Heaven. They are not drawn by temporal things to cleave unto them; rather they draw temporal things to serve them well, in such ways as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Great Work-master, who has left nothing in His creation without due order." [63]

It is my guess that if Weber had been really familiar with the *Imitation of Christ,* which in no way can be construed as the result of worldly influences, he would not have sprung upon a credulous world his fantastic thesis. Moreover, if his disciples had known books like that which Thomas a Kempis wrote in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, when far removed from the bustle of trade

[63] Book III, Chs. XLII, XXXVIII.

and industry, they would have repudiated Weber's thesis before it reached its way into numerous textbooks in use in England and this country.

Once more we meet Richard Steele, who was a minister of the congregation at Armourers Hall in London. He reflected the business atmosphere that prevailed in the great metropolis, just as it was snatching the scepter of commercial and industrial dominion from Amsterdam. Although he warns his followers against fraud in business, he remarks that there is no conflict between religion and business: "Prudence and piety were always good friends. . . . You may gain enough of both worlds if you would mind each in its place." Business must be dedicated to God. The merchant must use his talents to good advantage: "How is it that you stand idle all day? Your trade is your proper province. . . . Your vineyard you must keep. . . . Your fancies, your understandings, your memories are all to be laid out therein." There is here no repetition of medieval arguments, so we are told, but plain common sense. Prudence, thrift, hard work, sobriety, moderation—these are the qualities that will bring in their train worldly success.[64]

It seems strange that Christians in the Roman Empire, or in the days of the Crusades, or in the busy marts of Constantinople (500-1100), or in the thriving cities of Italy at the close of the Middle Ages, had not been familiar with these simple maxims. There is, however, this to be said about the Rev. Richard Steele. He went a trifle far in his capacity as minister of the Gospel of Christ to invade the secular field of trade. Perhaps he did not care to listen to those typical Puritans whom we have just met, those, I mean, who had made the startling discovery that each person should remain in his calling and not invade that of another. Shall we now scold this minister for having confused us so badly?

Another Puritan divine who is supposed to reflect the influence of Puritanism upon capitalism, or the reverse, was the Rev. John Flavel, a man of deep religious zeal and practical piety. He was one of the rapidly diminishing number of Puritan ministers who after the Restoration of 1660 placed religious convictions above economic advantages. Until 1656 he was rector at Deptford in Devonshire, while during the next six years he filled the pulpit of a much larger

[64] R. H. Tawney, *l.c.*, pp. 241-245.

congregation in the populous town of Dartmouth, in the same county. He lost his position, owing to the Act of Uniformity of 1662, but continued to preach wherever he could. For twenty years he suffered privation and close confinement, for the Five Mile Act permitted no preaching by non-conformists within five miles of an incorporated town. He is noted for two of his treatises, entitled respectively, *Husbandry Spiritualized,* and, *Navigation Spiritualized*; for these are said to reflect the new era in the development of Puritanism. Eight other works, devoted to such subjects as *The Soul of Man, The Fountain of Life, The Method of Grace, Sacramental Meditations,* and *The Saint Indeed,* do not appear to have attracted the attention of the Weberian school of experts.

Flavel seems to have imitated the method employed by Jesus of Nazareth, who used many illustrations from the realm of nature. He opens his treatise on *Husbandry Spiritualized* thus: "*Observation.* The employment of the husbandman is by all acknowledged to be very laborious. There is a multiplicity of business incumbent on him. . . . *Application.* Behold here the life of a serious Christian shadowed forth. As the life of the husbandman, so the life of a Christian is no idle or easy life. They that take up religion for ostentation, and not for an occupation, and they that place the business of it in notions and idle speculations, in forms, gestures, and external observances, may think and call it so; but such as devote themselves to it, and make religion their business, will find it no easy work to exercise themselves into godliness. Many there are that affect the reputation of it, who cannot endure the labor of it. If men might be indulged to divide their heart between God and the world, or to cull out the cheap and easy duties of it, and neglect the more difficult and costly ones, it were an easy thing to be a Christian: But surely, to have a respect to all of God's commandments, to live the life, as well as speak the language, of a Christian; to be holy in all manner of conversation, is not so easy."

Flavel then goes on to draw illustrations from nature. The fourth chapter discusses the "Quality of Arable Land," the fifth, "Improvement of Bad Ground," the sixth, "Incurableness of some Bad Ground," the seventh and eighth, on "Plowing" and "Seed Corn," etc. There is also a comparison between wheat and tares, just as Jesus had presented in one of His parables. Also, there is the

parable of the sower. The first chapter of the second part is enttiled, "On the Grafting of Fruit-Trees," and again we are reminded of the Gospel story. There are at the end of the work a number of meditations on the singing of nightingales, the sight of small birds chirping about a dead hawk, the catching of a horse in the pasture, the hunting of a deer, the fall of blossoms, the gathering of choice fruit from an unpromising tree, the withering of a rose and some other flowers, and finally, the strange means of preserving the life of vegetables.

In the treatise called, *Navigation Spiritualized,* the author follows the same method. He starts thus: *Observation.* No sooner is a ship built, launched, rigged, victualled, and manned, than she is presently sent out into the boisterous ocean, where she is never at rest. . . . *Application.* No sooner come we into the world as men or as Christians, by a natural or supernatural birth, than we are thus tossed upon the sea of troubles." Once more, a large number of interesting subjects are brought up for discussion and application. The vastness of the ocean, the danger of the seamen, the saltness of the water, the stability of the rocks, the food provided for the inhabitants of the sea, the compass, the tides, the tempests, the preying of fishes upon one another, etc. Under the last title, the writer observes that "the merciless and oppressive are wicked men, whose tender mercies are cruel.' . . . These are, by the Holy Ghost, compared with the fishes of the sea, see Hab. I, 13. . . . You may overpower the poor in this world, and, it may be, they cannot contend with you at man's bar; therefore God will bring you before His bar." [65]

It seems to me that what Flavel is achieving here is not "the practical application of these [Puritan] generalities to business," as one writer among the Weberians in England has maintained, but the illustration of things drawn from the realm of nature to be applied to the development of Christian virtues. The Puritans, unlike the men who wrote such books as the *Spiritual Exercises* (by Ignatius Loyola), or the *Rosary of Spiritual Exercises* (by John Mombaer), did not set their heart on systematic courses of exercises.

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[65] *Select Divines,* Vol. VII (Nos. XVI and XVII), *Containing Flavel's Husbandry Spiritualized, Navigation Spiritualized, Causes and Cure of Mental Errors, Rise and Growth of Antinomian Errors,* ed. the Rev. C. Bradley (London, 1822).

Turning now for a few moments to the Puritans in America, we see them perpetuating the same characteristics that marked William Perkins, John Robinson and William Prynne. As one American historian has recently indicated, the Pilgrim's compact of 1620, and John Winthrop's *Modell of Christian Charity* of 1630 "show a consciousness of the superiority of the interests of the group above the interests of any individual which was realized so far as practicable in later economic legislation." [66] The author considers this a mark of socialism rather than capitalism, which is correct. Even more so it is a symptom of the attempt to maintain the pristine purity of the Christian religion.

Cotton Mather also gives us valuable material with which to illustrate the workings of the Puritan mind. In the fifth book of his well-known *Magnalia Christi Americana, or, The Ecclesiastical History of New-England,* he presents a report of the "Necessity of Reformation" as made by the synod of 1679. Two questions had been raised, the first as to what were the evils that had provoked the Lord to bring His judgments on New England; the second as to what was to be done about it. In the answer to the first question we meet many of the familiar touches of Puritan piety. The first point is the "great and visible decay of the power of Godliness amongst many professors in these churches." The second is pride; the third, is frequent violation of the second commandment, a worshiping of false gods, Quakerism, Anabaptism, etc. There has also been too much swearing and Sabbath-breaking (Nos. 4 and 5). Moreover, altogether too little time is spent in prayer and the reading of the Bible, while inordinate passions also lead men's minds astray; intemperance in drinking is an allied evil (Nos. 6, 7 and 8). There is much want of truth, a breaking of promises (No. 9). Inordinate affection unto the world receives especial attention in the report: "There hath been in many professors an insatiable desire after land and worldly accommodations; yea, so as to forsake churches and ordinances, and to live like heathen, only so that they might have elbow-room enough in the world. Farms and merchandisings have been preferred before the things of God. In this respect the interest

[66] C. Day, "Capitalistic and Socialistic Tendencies in the Puritan Colonies," in *Reports of the American Historical Association* (for 1920), No. XI (Washington, D.C., 1925), p. 232.

of New-England seemeth to be changed. We differ from other out-goings of our nation, in that it was not any worldly considerations that brought our fathers into this wilderness, but religion, even so that they might build a sanctuary unto the Lord's name; whereas now religion is made subservient unto worldly interests." Two sub-divisions under this tenth point indicate the importance of it, and it is said that the reason why God has lately visited the colony with unfavorable weather, is because of this spirit of worldliness. The remaining three points are devoted respectively to the opposition to reformation, the lack of public spirit, and indifference to the beliefs of the Gospel. Nothing is said about the indolence of the people in neglecting their daily calling; on the contrary, it is plainly assumed that far too much interest is displayed in that as it is. Such a report one might have expected from the Puritan churches in America in 1679.[67] It is very different from what the Weberian school has led many Americans to believe.

The fundamental essence of the Weberian thesis with respect to Puritanism, as Professor Henri Sée indicated in his article published in 1927 in the *Revue Historique,* and the most successful portion of the said thesis as well, is the emphasis placed upon the duty of the Puritan to work hard, to save money, to accumulate capital. The writings examined by Weber and his followers do not support their theory. On the contrary, I shall demonstrate that they have injected something into Puritanism that was not there to begin with, except in some isolated instances and on a minor scale. The accumulation of temporal possessions was generally frowned upon by the Puritan divines, as we have seen. The admonition to work hard was common to all good Christians. And the saving of money was a typically European trait, noticeable even now in Catholic France.

We shall now find certain qualities which were ascribed to Puritans generally, to have been accepted more readily by the Anglicans than by the Puritans. At the same time we shall note how the religious atmosphere changed at Cambridge from the Puritanism of William Perkins to the Anglicanism of Isaac Barrow. The latter became a fellow at Cambridge in 1651, traveled abroad from 1655-1659, and, upon his return was episcopally ordained, even before the Restoration of 1660. For several years he held a chair of mathe-

[67] See the Hartford edition of 1853, Vol. II, pp. 320-326.

matics, until in 1669 he resigned this position, to be succeeded by Isaac Newton, the famous scientist. In the same year 1669 he was asked by the University to draw up an exposition of the Anglican creed, the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments; for since 1666 he had held a doctor's degree in divinity. As Master of Trinity College, and for a time also as vice-chancellor of the University, he exerted much influence upon the scholarly world of his native country, and his theological works were so voluminous that they fill nine large volumes, published by the Cambridge University Press. The first and the ninth volume contain biographical data about him.

Dr. Barrow was an eminent scholar, a broad-minded preacher, and a practical thinker. If only he had been a Puritan, he would have furnished certain writers considerable evidence for the theory of theirs just mentioned. But he certainly cannot be called a Puritan, as may be judged from his career and from a dissertation entitled, *Relating to the Dissenters.* In this dissertation he lauds the Church of England, and tries to show how far superior it is to the churches of the non-conformists. Under the eighth point he says, "The poverty of many places (very populous) which yield not competent maintenance." He means that the ministers of these churches will be much better off by returning to the Church of England.[68]

Barrow's views on industry and money-making are thus expressed in some of his sermons on industry: "By our transgression and fall the necessity of industry (together with a difficulty of obtaining good, and avoiding evil) was increased to us; being ordained both as a just punishment for our offences, and as an expedient remedy of our needs: for thereupon the ground was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to us. . . . Wealth is that which generally men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent desire, as the great storehouse of their needs and conveniences, the sure bulwark of their state and dignity; the universal instrument of compassing their designs and pleasures; and most evident it is, that in the natural course of things, industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it; the which course pursued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing that he will further and bless it. . . .

[68] I. Barrow, *Theological Works,* Vol. IX, p. 581.

"Another darling of human affection (and a jewel, indeed, of considerable worth and use in our life) is honor, or reputation among men: this also plainly, after the common reason and course of things, is purchased and preserved by industry. . . . No industrious man is contemptible; for he is ever looked upon as being in the way of thriving, of working himself out from any straits, of advancing himself into a better condition. . . . Are we rich? Then is industry requisite for keeping and securing our wealth, for managing it wisely, for employing it to its proper uses and best advantages. . . . Are we in conspicuous rank of dignity, or in honor and repute among men? Then is industry requisite to keep us fast in that state, to hold us from tumbling from that pinnacle down into extreme disgrace.

"The business of our particular calling; that in reference whereto St. Paul does prescribe, 'Every man as the Lord has called him, so let him walk: Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.' Let him so abide, so faithfully to prosecute the work, and discharge the duty of it. . . . Every man is a member of a double body; of the civil commonwealth, and of the Christian Church. . . . There is no member designed to be idle or useless, conferring no benefit on the whole." [69]

The Anglican viewpoint on industry and one's calling is also well expressed by John Tillotson (1630-1694), who in 1689 became Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and in 1691 archbishop of Canterbury. In one of his sermons, entitled, *Of Diligence in our General and Particular Calling,* he presented all those typical Christian opinions which thousands of preachers had enunciated before him, but which somehow in our day are said to have been the private and almost exclusive property of the Puritans. Tillotson used as his text, Ecclesiastes IX, 10, "Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might." This sounds very Puritanical indeed to certain writers, but it is no more than a statement used by all sorts of Christian authors and preachers.[70]

Similar opinions are presented by Henry Wilkinson, Principal of Magdalen-Hall, Oxford University, who on June 20, 1648,

[69] I. Barrow, *Theological Works,* Vol. III (Cambridge, 1859) pp. 349, 356, 357, 358, 383.

[70] *The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, late Archbishop of Canterbury,* ed. R. Barker, Vol. II (London, 1712), pp. 378-392.

preached a sermon at St. Mary's Church, Oxford, entitled, *The Pearl of Price.* He said: "A merchant is a man of indefatigable labors and industry; he compasses sea and land, and negotiates in foreign places for his advantage: Hereupon the good housewife, Proverbs XXI, 14, is compared to merchants' ships. . . . A merchant is a man of much employment, and therefore must be very diligent and industrious: He well knows that of Solomon, 'That the hand of the diligent makes rich.' And thus must every true believer, every merchant for the soul, be a man of diligence and unwearied labors." [71]

Still another illustration of the Anglican appreciation of industry and devotion to one's particular calling, may be seen in the biography of Lancelot Andrewes by Henry Isaacson (1581-1654). No Puritan could have surpassed this learned and pious bishop, according to the description by Isaacson: "His indefatigability in study cannot be paralelled, if we consider him from his childhood to his old age. Never any man took such pains, or at least spent so much time in study, as this reverend Prelate; for even in those days when it might have been supposed he would have taken some ease from his former pains, then also from the hour he arose, his private devotions finished, to the time he was called to dinner. . . . he kept close to his book." [72]

Hundreds of other examples might easily be produced to indicate that faithful application to one's vocation was highly praised by the Anglicans. Were they more lax in the observance of the Sabbath, as is no doubt correct, it may well be argued that thus they favored capitalism more than the Puritans, who were more anxious than were the Anglicans to devote the maximum amount of time possible to religious observances. It is well known that the Latitudinarians in the Church of England were very liberal in their interpretation of doctrine and discipline. They, much more than the typical Puritans, must have assisted in the revision of the old hostility toward usury.

It seems to me that Joseph Hall, who in 1618 represented King

[71] H. Wilkinson, *Three Decads of Sermons lately preached to the University of Oxford,* Vol. I (Oxford, 1660), p. 79.

[72] *Anglicanism, The thought and Practice of the Church of England, illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century,* ed. P. E. More and F. L. Cross (Milwaukee, Wisc., 1935), p. 729.

James I at the international Calvinist Synod of Dordrecht, was more "advanced" in this respect than was William Ames, whose attitude was discussed above. In a letter by Mr. Hall addressed on February 2, 1619, to his brother in the faith, Dr. S. Ward, he wrote that the previous Sunday he had had a discussion with the king at dinner about the results of the Synod of Dordrecht. James was dissatisfied because the president, so thought the king, had ousted the Arminians. From this time both the king and the archbishop of Canterbury drifted toward the camp of the more liberal Calvinists.[73] And Joseph Hall likewise broke with the rigid Calvinists who clung to the extreme view on predestination. Usually such a break also entailed a friendlier attitude toward capitalism, for liberalism in theology would naturally accompany liberalism in interpreting the biblical injunctions against usury.

Consequently, when Joseph Hall in or shortly before 1649 composed his *Resolutions and Decisions of Divers Practical Cases of Conscience* (the title of which sounds very Puritanical), he did not follow the Calvinist or Lutheran arguments against usury, but those advanced previously by the scholastic theologians. He said: "However unlawful it is to covenant for a certain profit for the mere loan of money, yet there may be and are circumstances appending to the loan which may admit of some benefits to be lawfully made by the lender for the use of his money; and especially these two,—the loss that he sustains, and the gain that he misses, by want of the sum lent. For what reason can there be, that to give pleasure to another man I should hurt myself? That I should enrich another by my own loss? If, then, I shall incur a real loss or forfeiture by the delayed payment of the sum lent, I may justly look for a satisfaction from the borrower; yea, if there be a true danger of loss to me imminent, when the transaction is made, nothing hinders but that I may by compact make sure such a sum as may be sufficient for my indemnity." [74] It is interesting to note in this connection that the Puritans ejected Hall from his position at Norwhich, so that he was forced to retire to Higham, Norfolk, where he died in 1656.

A similar interpretation of usury with the typical Anglican flavor

[73] G. P. van Itterzon, "Koning Jacobus I en de synode van Dordrecht," in *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis,* New Series, Vol. XXIV (1931), pp. 187-204.
[74] *Anglicanism,* p. 678.

is that by Henry Hammond (1605-1660), who served as Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1645, shortly before he was appointed chaplain to King Charles I (1647). He was imprisoned by the Puritans, and thus he can hardly be said to have favored their viewpoints. In his work entitled, *Practical Catechism* (1644), he devoted a section to usury. He reasoned that the texts in the Old Testament were obscure and did not prohibit usury. Those in the New Testament were to be interpreted in accordance with the rule of Christian charity. "From whence, as I should conclude without any demur, that when I lend a poor man, I must not require use, any more than I must deny alms to him that wants it, when I have it to spare; so I cannot conclude it unlawful from hence to receive from a rich man (I mean, who does not need alms) what interest or increase he is willing to give me, which is, I suppose, the question resolved. All I conceive necessary to be added by way of caution is, first, that I take care that such lending to the rich do not disable me from assisting the poor. Secondly, that I am sure that he who pays me this use is able to do it without eating out or hurting himself, but that he makes greater gain of it by trading, or the like. Thirdly, that it be not so done as that it may bring reproach or censure of worldly-mindedness or illiberality upon me, especially if I be a clergyman,—for by the Canons of ancient Councils, they are forbidden many things of this nature which were permitted others; much more that it be not an act of a covetous mind, but only a way of subsisting on that small portion my friends have left me." [75]

It is of course not at all surprising that the love of lucre resulted in curious theories, such as that propounded by the school-teacher at Love-gain, in northern England, when he argued that, since the performance of one's duty was profitable, the making of profit might be considered a duty. And how could it be helped that a few preachers actually defended the taking of interest on loans in the pulpit? An amusing incident is told by Tawney of how the son of Praise-God Barebones wrote a treatise entitled, *A Discourse of Trade,* by N.B., M.D. He was Dr. Nicholas Barbon, hence these initials. Unlike his pious father, he was an expert in banking and insurance, thus furnishing one of the many illustrations known in

[75] *Anglicanism,* pp. 680-681.

English history, of the transition from the God-fearing Puritan period to the laxity of the Cavalier age.

At this point Tawney perceives that we are no longer dealing with the effect of Puritanism upon capitalism but the destruction of Puritanism by capitalism, which, as I have intimated before, is the exact reverse of the thesis concocted so unfortunately by Max Weber. The intense rivalry with the Dutch, the unscrupulous measures adopted by the big business men, and the devotion to the art of money-making gripped the populace of London, just as was the case with the people in Frankfort, Augsburg and Nuremberg in Luther's time. Luther had exclaimed that only one person out of a thousand was any longer a Christian. The English were doomed to a similar fate. Economic thought developed in England as the direct outcome of the need for intelligent supervision of trade and industry. Competition with the Dutch had taught the English many valuable lessons, and they eagerly read the treatises which had previously appeared in the Dutch Republic, dealing with matters of shipping, banking, monopolies, accounting, etc. All of this has been set forth by Tawney.[76]

Another mortal foe of Puritanism was the double restoration of the monarchy and the Church of England under Charles II in 1660. After that year Puritanism gradually died out in England, and after 1700 one must turn to New England or to Scotland to study the true Puritan spirit. Very misleading indeed have been the arguments of those who quoted from Anglican writings produced in the eighteenth century to show how Puritanism before 1650 helped to advance the cause of capitalism. The most famous of these later works is *The New Whole Duty of Man, containing the Faith as well as the Practice of a Christian: Made Easy for the Practice of the Present Age,* which first made its appearance in the reign of George II. But even this work adds nothing to what had been said thousands of times by Christian writers in the Middle Ages or in the sixteenth century. Both Catholics and Protestants had uttered the sentiments which I reproduce here.

"Do not impose upon any man's ignorance. As long as you keep within the latitude of lawful gain, you may use your skill against

[76] But it should be noted that his unscientific treatment of Luther and Calvin in the earlier chapters has not failed to mar the picture drawn by him of Puritanism.

another man in driving a bargain: for in an ordinary plenty of commodities there is an ordinary price, which those that deal in them know and understand; and when the contractors equally understand the price, there can be no deception or injustice in the contract, be it ever so hard. On the contrary, if he whom I contract with be ignorant or unskilful, I must not rate his want of understanding, or set a tax on his ignorance, but use him justly, as one that reposes a trust in me, and casts himself upon my equity; for if I do not this, I am guilty of injustice.

"It is indeed known that unjust dealing may sometimes raise a man's fortune; but it is as well known that in its natural tendency it impairs and ruins it; because, by dealing unjustly, he makes it every man's interest to forsake him, and he sets a cross upon his own door to warn all customers from entering therein. . . . Injustice is as great an error in politics as in morals, and shows that a person who practises it has as little wit as honesty. The sum is therefore briefly this: he that in the whole course of his life acts sincerely and justly, with a continual respect to the reason of things, and to the law of God; that carries on all his undertakings by fair and equitable means, avoiding all frauds and deceits, all base and unworthy practices; this man takes the wisest and surest course to succeed in all his designs, respecting either his present or his future happiness."

Very interesting are the comments on the attainment of wealth: "As titular dignities entitle men to an outward respect and observance, so also does wealth and large possessions; for, when God bestows upon one man a larger fortune and possession than on another, he does thereby prefer and advance him into a higher sphere and condition; and when God has set him above us, it is just and fit that we should rise and give that place to him which is of God's appointment. Though, it may be, a wise or virtuous poor man since in outward rank or condition God has preferred the latter, he has more right to our esteem than a fortunate knave or fool; yet, has the right of precedency, and of outward respect and observance; and ought to be treated with greater regard and obeisance."

The author, who shows himself to be allied with the owners of property, and wants no disturbances caused by the lower classes, observes that these people must be satisfied with their lot: "Hereby they are not only rendered useless to the commonwealth, but they

often cause it a great deal of mischief by unsettling and subverting other men, and filling their heads with an abundance of foolish notions and scruples in religion, which are dangerous to government, and the public peace and happiness. . . . The man who serves God by continual application to the duty of his calling and state of life, besides the comfort of a good conscience, which is of all others the greatest happiness, such an honest and industrious laborer may entirely depend upon the goodness of God, that He will always take care of him: God will bless and prosper him in the work of his hands." [77]

It would seem that we are dealing here with a work from the pen of an Anglican writer who would have smiled indulgently had he been informed that in the twentieth century he would be quoted to prove how the Puritans supported the rise of modern capitalism. Of course, by the time we reach the middle of the eighteenth century, it can hardly be said that capitalism was in need of Puritan assistance. It had nearly killed Puritanism as it was, so why should it now have to turn around and seek assistance from its wounded victim? But it might be argued that the thrift, the honesty, and the insistence upon moderation in all things as introduced by the Puritans helped to establish capitalism. True, this was done unwittingly though successfully.

The eighteenth century was an age of "enlightenment," that is, of skepticism, scientific inquiry, and sophistry. The new spirit of supercilious inquiry into the validity of the Christian religion was exemplified almost perfectly by the French philosophers led by Voltaire and Rousseau. Mammon-worship could now be indulged in wholeheartedly and joyfully. The scruples of conscience were no more, except in limited circles where the old principles of Calvinism were humbly perpetuated. Then followed the French Revolution with its attack upon the privileged classes and upon the deity Itself. Napoleon recognized some of the follies committed during the reigns of terror, and one of the first and most important things he did as First Consul of France, was to make peace with the Pope. Once more the revealed religion of Christ as presented in the Bible became a thing respected by all classes of people in Europe.

[77] These quotations have been adapted from the original version, as reproduced in H. M. Robertson, *l.c.*, pp. 21-25.

The Wesleyan movement in England, which had had its inception during the second half of the eighteenth century, continued its work among the masses of the people. In the nineteenth century, the Oxford movement brought a great revival of religious fervor into the Church of England, and in the kingdom of the Netherlands a secession from the old state church was accompanied by a return to the pristine faith of the fathers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

At the same time, however, new forms of liberalism made their appearance. Modernism among the theologians renewed the attacks upon orthodox Christianity started by Voltaire in an earlier period, and socialism reared its head among the lower classes in the social order. Thus it happened that in the Netherlands a new political party was formed by the orthodox Calvinists under the name of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Allied as a rule with the Catholic Party, this and another Calvinist party named the Christian Historians, combined to withstand the advancing ranks of the Social Democrats. The greatest revival of Calvinism has no doubt occurred in recent years among the Dutch; and if the reader would like to know how Calvinism operates among large groups of people in this confusing age of ours, he can do no better than study the lives of the orthodox Calvinists in the Netherlands. Here he will also observe what Puritanism must have been in the first half of the seventeenth century, how it was vanquished in England in part by capitalism and in part by the overwhelming forces of Anglicanism, and how it can flourish in a modern state with renewed vitality.

Chapter IX

COMMUNISM AND THE SIT-DOWN STRIKE MOVEMENT

The influence of Puritanism and of other forms of Protestantism, together with the influx of Catholic viewpoints, are reflected in the development of our political institutions and our whole system of law and government. Until the second term of the Roosevelt administration, our national government perpetuated in a large degree the principles laid down by the fathers of our commonwealth. The roots of our social order likewise rested so securely in the soil of democracy and Christianity that, unlike the peoples of Russia, Italy and Germany, we as a nation stood adamant in our refusal to adopt state socialism. Our political leaders remained faithful to the maxims transmitted by the Pilgrim Fathers and the Puritan settlers of New England. The rule of the people through representation, the right to own property, the privilege of worshiping God without molestation, and the liberty to work when one pleased—these were sacred possessions held dear by the American people.

Respect for law and order was once the pride of our republic, and millions of European immigrants paid tribute to our enlightened civilization and our unrivalled prosperity by coming here to live and make their homes. It was not so soon forgotten that the fathers of New England had laid excellent foundations of our national government when they wrote these words in the Charter of Massachusetts Bay Colony: "Our will and pleasure is . . . that if any person or persons . . . shall at any time rob or spoil, by sea or land, or do any hurt, violence, or unlawful hostility to any of the subjects of us. . . . that the person or persons having committed any such robbery or spoil, shall within the term limited by such a proclamation, make full restitution or satisfaction of all such injuries done. . . . and that if the said person or persons shall not make, or cause

to be made, satisfaction accordingly, within such time so to be limited, that then it shall be lawful for us, our heirs and successors, to put the said person or persons out of our allegiance and protection." [1]

But it seems that in the last few years a new spirit has entered this country from abroad. What used to be looked upon as wholesome and salutary is now frowned upon as tyranny and autocracy. The friendly relations between labor and capital, which made our nation the envy of the whole world, our liberty of speech and of the press, our social and religious fabric as well, must be relegated to the scrapheap of outworn traditions. Thus spoke a certain well-known educator when he delivered an address in Detroit during the summer of 1937, saying, "Let tradition be damned." Furthermore, all sorts of agitators have recently gone about the land trying to arouse the minds of our workmen to revolution and rioting.

These agitators make rash promises which remind me of the same thing that occurred in the Netherlands just after Dr. A. Kuyper had been Prime Minister. For a few years the socialists and "liberals" had their way, but their failure to remedy social and economic conditions was so dismal that they became thoroughly discredited. Today they are more discredited than ever, and the once so powerful Liberal Party has been almost completely destroyed. The national election held in the spring of 1937 plainly revealed what the Dutch people thought of the Calvinist and Catholic leaders who had successfully led them out of the economic depression by giving these leaders an overwhelming majority of votes. Thus has "liberalism" and socialism been repudiated by a sagacious people who were in as close touch with insidious communism and fascism as any on the face of the earth. The gifts that orthodox Christianity has brought to a people cramped in a ridiculously small territory, surrounded by envious neighbors, and threatened with the loss of its markets through innumerable tariff walls, were a stable currency (the soundest in the world), a balanced budget despite an expensive dole and relief system for the benefit of the poor, increased naval and

[1] *The Charters and General Laws of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston, 1814), p. 16. The charter is dated March 4, 1628. On the political theories of the Puritans, see G. E. Ellis, *The Puritan Age and Rule 1629-1685* (Boston, 1888), pp. 8-266.

military power, repression of law-breaking of every kind, respect for law and order, and a recuperation of economic power extending to all parts of the European mother-country and the dominions in Asia and America. It was the return to the Puritanism and Calvinism of the first half of the seventeenth century, combined with the support given by the Catholic Party, which was primarily responsible for the sweeping victory obtained by the orthodox Calvinist prime minister. This victory was significant, as was admitted in the newspapers published in France and Germany.

As far as this country was concerned, the election did not pass unheeded, and the editorial in the Washington Evening Star of May 28th may be considered as representative of the enlightened opinion everywhere: "Those two sturdy outposts of democracy in Western Europe—Belgium and the Netherlands—have now in prompt succession rebuffed at the polls foreign-inspired attempts to impregnate their national life with political 'ideology' alien alike to their soil and traditions. The Belgians several weeks ago, under the gallant leadership of Premier Van Zeeland, firmly repelled efforts to establish fascism at Brussels. This week Dutch Premier Hendryk Colijn, at the head of a coalition of moderate liberal elements, received an unmistakable vote of confidence in the election for members of the States General. The result is that Holland's national affairs will continue to be dominated by the Calvinist group, of which the premier is the leader, in collaboration with the Roman Catholics. . . .

"Most gratifying from the Dutch standpoint is the fact that the National Socialists, domestic counterpart of the German Nazis, were decisively beaten. Presenting candidates for the first time, they anticipated sweeping successes as the result of long and vigorous agitation, but thy emerge with fewer than half a dozen seats out of a total of 100 in the lower house. No less impressive and reassuring is the failure of the Communists to make progress. Their strength of four seats had dropped to three in early returns and may be still further reduced by the final count.

"To democratic Europe, fighting so desperately on many fronts to hold its own against reaction of the Hitler-Mussolini brand, the Netherlanders' stand for perpetuation of representative government is highly encouraging. Along with developments in Belgium,

it is vivid proof that totalitarianism's advance, at least in the west of the continent, is effectually checked. In Premier Colijn's case, the result bulwarks his 'policy of adaptation' to the Dutch economic crisis and his refusal to be swayed by demagogic demands for questionable panaceas. Nazis and Communists alike sought to persuade the country that salvation lies only in extremist systems of dictatorial pattern. Queen Wilhelmina's people have once more splendidly justified their reputation for political steadiness. They have shown that it takes more than Nazis, Fascists or Communists to beat the Dutch."

There appeared some factual errors in this editorial, which have not been reproduced here. The editor believed that the Socialists had supported Colijn. Furthermore, he was of the opinion that Colijn had received the collaboration of the old Liberal Party, which generally used to cooperate with the Social Democratic Party. I have also observed that the way Dorothy Thompson has used the word "Liberal" in her article in the Ladies' Home Journal for November, 1937, is misleading in that it does not take cognizance of the recent history of the two great parties in England and Holland respectively which under the name of Liberal Party long opposed the conservatives. In this country we would consider both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party up to 1933 as the opponents of the Liberal Party. In the Netherlands, the majority of the members of the Liberal Party have deserted their party and have joined the ranks of either the Social Democrats, or the Fascists, or the Communists, thus showing their dislike for orthodox Christianity, or for democracy or for both. In England, most members of the Liberal Party have gone over to the Labor Party. A little more study of recent European history will enable writers like Dorothy Thompson to understand why the Fascists and Communists call themselves Liberals. This is not, as she thinks, because "they know what Liberalism is, and they are against it."

What has happened in Europe is this. The Liberal Party, as it functioned in the second half of the nineteenth century in England, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands, favored liberalism in politics; it offered a more extensive franchise to the lower classes, advocated a lax foreign policy, and attempted successfully for the most part to establish a measure of state socialism. The conservatives, under

pressure from the enlightened views of the liberals, became less autocratic as a class and yielded to the demand for social justice. But the conservatives remained firm in their opposition to easy-going foreign policies, and they refused to accept the socialistic interpretation of the rights and duties of the average citizen. Their opinion was still that God had not made all men equal, and they also clung to the belief that there is a God whose laws must be obeyed, and whose power must be recognized. In short, the conservatives generally followed the attitude formerly expressed by the Christian statesmen who had applied the principles of Christian charity to politics and legislation.

In returning for a moment to the English colonies in America, we observe that a man like Governor Winthrop of Plymouth Colony, was bound to express his confidence in God's providence. Consequently, he wrote these words in his pamphlet of the year 1622, entitled, *Good News from New England*: "But it pleased God, for our further chastisement, to send a great drought; insomuch as in six weeks after the latter setting there scarce fell any rain. . . . So that, at once, God seemed to deprive us of all future hopes. The most courageous were now discouraged; because God, which hitherto had been our only Shield and Supporter, now seemed, in his anger, to arm himself against us: and who can withstand the fierceness of his wrath? These and like-considerations moved not only every good man privately to enter into examination with his own estate between God and his conscience; and so to humiliation before him: but also more solemnly to humble ourselves together before the Lord by fasting and prayer. . . . But, O the mercy of our God! who was as ready to hear as we to ask. For though in the morning, when we assembled together, the heavens were as clear, and the drought as likely to continue, as ever it was: yet our Exercise continuing some eight or nine hours, before our departure, the weather was overcast, and the clouds gathered on all sides. . . . Such was the bounty and goodness of our God." [2]

There is indeed a great difference between the religious principles of the Puritans and the Pilgrim Fathers, who sought to follow biblical injunctions in organizing society perfectly, and the liberals

[2] *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers, 1606-1623; as told by Themselves, their Friends, and their Enemies,* ed. E. Arber (London, Boston, New York, 1897), pp. 577-578.

who wanted state socialism as the only salvation of the ills threatening the people as a whole. How well the present-day confusion of terms in this country has been grasped by some members of our Congress, however, may be seen in the words of Senator B. K. Wheeler, who in his speech at Grand Rapids on October 12, 1937, said: "Today it cannot be said that the Democrats or Republicans have any definite opinion they can be said to be following. You have men who call themselves liberals who say they favor a Communist regime, but the same people are opposed to a totalitarian state. You also find those who favor the totalitarian state, but who are opposed to Communism. . . . I see a parallel between conditions here today and those in Europe shortly after the war. The liberalism synonomous with democracy in 1923 is synonomous now with Naziism, Fascism and the totalitarian state. The question that confronts the world today is whether democracy is to be preserved or whether we are going back to dictatorship."

Although in the present work we are not concerned with the history of political ideas and institutions, it should be noted here that, during the War of the American Revolution, the leading citizens in the original thirteen colonies and states opposed the growing demand for a complete expression of democracy. When once the war was over, the radical elements, which had gotten control of several state governments and who formed powerful minorities in all the other states, faced a terrific contest with the owners of extensive property and business interests for the control of the federal government. It had long been the belief among the men of financial power and social prestige that the masses of the people never know how to govern themselves, nor will they ever learn to assist others in doing so. Acting upon this belief, in the period when our constitution was framed, the aristocrats were able to establish a strong federal government. Alexander Hamilton wrote: "The idea of an uncontrollable sovereignty in each state will defeat the other powers given to Congress, and make our union feeble and precarious. . . . Congress should have complete sovereignty in all that relates to war, peace, trade, finance." And General Knox, alarmed by the Shays' Rebellion of 1786, which resembled some of the recent events in the state of Michigan, penned these significant words: "This dreadful situation has alarmed every man of principle and property in New

England. Our government must be braced, changed, or altered to secure our lives and property. The men of property and the men of station and principle are determined to endeavor to establish and protect them in their lawful pursuits."

The convention that drafted our constitution, was indeed an august assembly of aristocrats. Such apostles of liberalism as Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine were absent, and the smaller business men and farmers were not represented at all. Eight members had been among those who had signed the Declaration of Independence; seven had been governors of states, or colonies; nearly thirty had sat in the Congress; the majority were lawyers of considerable experience and reputation. George Washington, who was perhaps the wealthiest man in North America at the time, was chosen president of the convention. He and his associates were men of sound minds, but not imbued with what afterward was called liberalism. As one American historian has recently written, "Nearly all agreed that democracy was a dangerous thing and that the majority will should be limited as far as possible." [3]

Madison wrote in Number 10 of the *Federalist* that the diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, form an insuperable obstacle to the uniformity of interests. Consequently, "the protection of these faculties is the first object of government." Madison argued that those persons who are equipped with agile minds and great industry, will accumulate more property than their more indolent and ignorant neighbors. In his opinion, the resulting unequal distribution of property will cause in turn a diversity of political beliefs and the adherence to such parties as will favor respectively one or more classes of people.

An opinion from one of the delegates to the Massachusetts ratifying convention will illustrate how the poorer classes regarded the successes attained thus far by the framers of the constitution: "These lawyers and men of learning and moneyed men that talk so finely, and gloss over matters so smoothly, to make us poor people swallow the pill, expect to get into Congress themselves; they expect to be the managers of the Constitution, and get all the power and all the

[3] H. J. Carman, *Social and Economic History of the United States,* Vol. I (1930), p. 347.

money into their own hands, and then they will swallow up all us little folks, like the great leviathan, Mr. President." [4]

The French Revolution, which did not break out until after our constitution had been adopted, caused many thousands of Americans to clamor for reform of the social order. At first it appealed not only to the radicals but also to numerous members of the middle class. But when the real nature of the movement became fully apparent in this country, few persons outside of the more radical elements continued to applaud the principles of Voltaire and Rousseau. The revulsion which the anti-Christian spirit of the French Revolution provoked in the minds of the Hamiltonians, was well expressed in these words of Timothy Dwight, president of Yale University: "Is it that our churches may become temples of reason, our Sabbath a decade, and our psalms of praise Marseillaise hymns? Shall our sons become the disciples of Voltaire and the dragoons of Marat; or our daughters the concubines of the *illuminati?*"

Happy indeed were the Francophiles when Washington retired from the presidency, as may be seen in the comments of a grandson of Benjamin Franklin: "If ever there was a period of rejoicing, this is the moment. Every heart, in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people, ought to beat high with exultation that the name of Washington from this day ceases to give currency to political iniquity and to legalize corruption." [5] However, little cause for rejoicing was to be seen in the words and actions of Washington's immediate successor, John Adams. Although the latter had sympathized with the radicals in his youth, he became ever more conservative in later years. It was his belief that the rich and the poor were both here to stay, and that it was the duty of the government to protect the poor against the exploitation of the rich, and to extend the strong hand of law and order to the rich, and thus guarantee to them their right to retain all their property.

Very different were some of the religious and social and economic beliefs of Thomas Jefferson, who was a deist, and as such an opponent of orthodox Christianity; favored agriculture above commerce and industry; frowned upon speculation and "big business;" and advocated universal secular education and the freedom of the press

[4] H. J. Carman, *l.c.*, p. 362.
[5] H. J. Carman ,*l.c.*, pp. 381, 388.

and of religion. His affinity with twentieth century liberals may be gathered from a letter which on January 27, 1800, he wrote to Joseph Priestly: "The Gothic idea that we are to look backwards instead of forwards for the improvement of the human mind, and to recur to the annals of our ancestors for what is most perfect in government, in religion, and in learning, is worthy of those bigots in religion and government by whom it has been recommended, and whose purpose it would answer." [6]

Jefferson combined excellent political and social thoughts and practices with his supposedly advanced views in religion, as may be seen in this statement of his: "A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government." [7] His own life, although he was a true aristocrat from Virginia, showed that he believed what he had said. It is no doubt his personal integrity combined with his support rendered to all the good features of democracy that has impelled many American writers to conclude that Jeffersonian democracy or republicanism was very largely dependent upon the anti-Christian principles of the French revolution.

"Jefferson," remarks one authority on American history, however, "did not need to read Rousseau and Montesquieu to become a thoroughgoing believer in the doctrine of the rights of man. He read them, but he was less influenced by the writings of the Europeans than by his own experiences in the democratic West. On the strength of his own observations he urged his fellow Virginians to do away with such medieval relics as entail and primogeniture, to guarantee everyone complete freedom of conscience, to abolish state support of an established church, to set up a system of public education, and to substitute for the existing cruelties of the penal code more reasonable and humane punishments." [8]

But it must not be imagined that Jefferson, despite his simplicity in manners and his sympathy for the masses of the people, forgot

[6] H. U. Faulkner, *American Political and Social History* (New York, 1937) p. 146.
[7] H. C. Hockett, *Political and Social Growth of the United States*, 1492-1852. (New York, 1936), p. 358.
[8] J. D. Hicks, *The Federal Union, A History of the United States to 1865* (Boston, New York, 1937), p. 257.

that he himself belonged to the aristocracy. He deliberately chose to employ the services of men of his own class, including James Madison, the "father of the Constitution;" Nathaniel Macon, Speaker of the House; John Randolph, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means; and Albert Gallatin, who had been a professor at Harvard. What Jefferson did was to transfer the leadership from the business class to the agrarian class, that is, the southern planters. It is, therefore, no wonder that he showed little interest in foreign affairs, and neglected our national defence.

During the election of 1808, Jefferson strongly supported his friend Madison, who was the fourth president chosen from the upper classes, and who did practically nothing for the enfranchisement of the people as a whole. While the commercial East favored peace and Madison's opponent, Clinton, in the election of 1812, so as to insure a continuation of the profitable trade with Europe; the South and West threw their support to Madison, and thus the War of 1812 promptly followed. The development of American democracy, together with the rise of the economic independence of the United States, occurred shortly after 1812, regardless of the attitude displayed by the President at that time.

Caste lines now disappeared rapidly, and the Americans threw off the shackles of the impediments to the attainment of wealth and social prestige which in most European countries still obstructed the capable and industrious members of society in their quest of equality with the aristocracy. Pronounced was the degree of individualism which presently characterized the American people. It was only natural that the new states in the West, upon their admittance into the Union, adopted universal manhood suffrage, thus evincing the earmarks of true democracy; for on the virgin soil of the West there had not been constructed the castles and manors which were the emblems of the caste system of European civilization. How different were conditions in France at that time! Even in the midst of their Revolution, the French drastically reduced the franchise through property and other qualifications; while, after the Revolution, a reaction set in, which brought the privileged classes back into power. As late as 1830, following the July Revolution, a new constitution was framed which gave the franchise to only two hundred thousand men out of eight millions who were over twenty-

five years old. Thus Professor Paul Van Dyke of Princeton had to admit that "the Monarchy, though it was constitutional, was not democratic." Furthermore, equality of opportunity was almost unknown in France from the beginning of modern times until the end of the nineteenth century, and democracy was not introduced there before 1848.[9] In short, American democracy was clearly the product of local forces, and those who pride themselves on this our common heritage, need not look to the French Revolution in seeking there its principal origins.

The history of our Supreme Court throws further light on the growth of American democracy. Much is said today about a return to Jeffersonian democracy. But whatever this may mean, it should be observed that Jefferson was far from friendly to the Supreme Court: "The judiciary of the United States," he wrote in 1820, "is the subtle corps of sappers and miners constantly working underground to undermine the foundations of our confederate fabric. They are constantly construing our constitution from a co-ordination of a general and special government, to a general and supreme alone." [10] Today the Supreme Court is assailed by many as a bulwark of outworn traditions. It has become fashionable to say with Jefferson that the justices "lay all things at their feet," and that these justices "are too well versed in the English law to forget the maxim, 'boni judicis est ampliare jurisdictionem.' " They want to enlarge their jurisdiction, so say their critics. And, as President Roosevelt remarked on October 12, 1937, the advancing prosperity of the American people has been checked. Who has been responsible for this check? The President did not say, but all his listeners knew that he meant the Supreme Court. When rulers become impatient at their judiciary, and when they have visions of reforms that are being checked by jurists who point to existing laws and ordinances that must be respected, we see what the French saw under Louis XIV—the rise or the threatened rise of autocracy.

We are now witnessing a phenomenon in this country which appears to be a perfect replica of recent events in the Netherlands. These events produced exactly the same state of mind as that which

[9] J. D. Hicks, *l.c.*, pp. 328-329; A. Hyma, *Europe from the Renaissance to 1815* (1931), pp. 475, 557; P. Van Dyke, *The Story of France* (1928), pp. 498-501.

[10] J. D. Hicks, *l.c.*, p. 340.

brought large numbers of voters to the polls in Detroit on October 5, 1937, who sincerely believed that, when once a labor party were in control of the municipal government, the workmen would secure for themselves better working conditions, higher wages, lower rents, more personal liberties, and sundry other privileges, all at the expense of the more wealthy members of society who were held responsible for most of the ills that had befallen the poor. The misguided voters turned a deaf ear to the three leading newspapers of Detroit, for they reasoned that the papers were controlled by the persecuting middle and upper classes. For had not their leaders told them that a labor party would render all future economic depressions impossible? That certain European countries had also experienced the same depression which visited us, was apparently unknown to the labor leaders in this country, nor did they realize that in the Netherlands, both the European motherland and the overseas dominions with a combined population of over sixty million, the depression was routed by the old-fashioned Christians, the law-abiding citizens, the kind-hearted but strict Catholics and Calvinists.

What may be expected from the new saviors of America can easily be determined by studying the results of similar events in a number of highly civilized countries in Europe, whose inhabitants, for the first time in half a century at the least, no longer envy us. Much can also be learned from editorials such as that which appeared in the evening of October 5, 1937, in the Detroit Free Press. On that same day, as we noted, occurred the significant election in Detroit; but also on that same day there occurred something decidedly ominous in the little town of Eaton Rapids, Michigan. To this latter event the editorial in question was devoted: "The methods of guerilla invasion and occupation which C.I.O. raiders tried unsuccessfully at Eaton Rapids, where farmers aided police in routing 75 carloads of them, are similar to methods members of the same outfit have tried in Detroit, at Monroe, at Flint, at Grand Rapids, at Port Huron and in other places in Michigan. They are organized attempts in imitation of night riding mobs, to brush aside orderly government and the forces of law. They are criminal efforts to crush private rights of all persons, including wage earners,

who refuse to accept the C.I.O. yoke; and to take over communities and run them for the benefit of the Lewis machine."

That those same law-breakers should have been enthusiastically supported by the Michigan Daily at Ann Arbor, a student publication which is supposed to represent the views of over ten thousand students, must seem remarkable to all lovers of justice and reason. On October 5, 1937, one of the editors of this publication, whose knowledge of history, politics and economics was still very limited, made bold to publish these significant words: "All three of Detroit's large newspapers, horrified at the thought of a labor government, are daily consecrating front page editorials to the necessity of the respectable propertied citizenry getting out and going to the polls to 'save Detroit's non-partisan form of government.' " The youthful editor reasoned that "the forces inimical to progressive labor will continue to do their best to hamper its political action by confusing the issue before the voters, a practice in which long experience has made them adept."

In other words, the handful of radical students at the University of Michigan who throughout the year 1937 controlled the editorial policies of the local student paper, with the result that very little could be published in that paper in favor of sound Americanism (including the right to own property, to work when and where one pleases, and to be represented if one is not in the majority party)—these radicals have made it appear as if both the faculty and the whole student body were very largely given over to a hatred of true democracy. During the second half of the academic year 1936-1937 this student newspaper continually voiced its approval of the communists in Spain who under the guise of the name "loyalists" played havoc with the most sacred rights of property and freedom of speech and work in that unhappy country. It likewise praised the Popular Front Party in France, and it had much to say in favor of those unfortunate agitators in this country who showed no respect for oaths and for written contracts. Such is the inevitable result of a little knowledge of American and European history, when it is wrongly applied.

Another illustration of how the respect for property rights has well-nigh disappeared in the minds of many persons in Michigan, may be seen in the notorious renters' strike in the city of Pontiac

during the month of June, 1937. I happened to give a lecture before the Rotary Club in Pontiac on the sit-down strike movement at the time, and the chauffeur who called for me at my home in Ann Arbor, explained to me the various angles involved in the dispute. He said that he himself could no longer pay the high rents that were asked, but that the workmen in the automobile factories had no cause for complaints, since their wages were the highest ever paid. Then I indicated to him the attitude of the typical landlord. I had recently rented my house to a family that was far better off than I was financially, but all the rent that I could collect was $20 less each month than the house cost me to maintain. When I pointed out to the tenants that I could not afford to lose money on this house all the time, they refused to pay $10 more, and bought a house of their own, being of the opinion that I had asked far too much as it was. In such disputes there is much need of sympathy for both parties concerned, but there is never a good excuse for refusing to pay any rent at all, as did the rent strikers in Pontiac. The owner of property does have certain rights, despite the arguments of some editors who in the course of the year 1937 pointed with scorn to such owners of property as being "afraid to lose their property." I believed that it was only logical for a person to be concerned about his property, especially those aged widows in Pontiac who depended on the rents for their living. When the savings of a life-time have gone into a piece of property, the owner is naturally hopeful of protection from the government against the law-breakers. In my own case it did not matter, for I still owed nearly as much on my home as it was worth. Nevertheless, certain communistically inclined leaders on our campus argued that all landlords must of necessty be opposed to progress.

On our way back from Pontiac, the chauffeur and I discussed many questions relating to the disturbances that had caused so much distress in Flint, Pontiac and Detroit. We rehearsed some of our own experiences, mine being those of an unfortunate laborer who at one time used to work in a furniture factory in Grand Rapids at ten cents an hour, while my father received fifteen cents an hour, that is, the two of us together, fourteen dollars a week for fifty-six hours of good labor on our part. The superintendent would not pay us any more, because we were "greenhorns," foreigners who could not

speak English, so we were informed. I also remarked that I now was earning two hundred dollars less each year as a full professor than I used to get as only an associate professor. My sympathy was certainly with those who did not receive adequate pay for their services.

On the other hand, I happened to be the founder of a local industry which furnished one of the three major automobile companies with a valuable product for cleaning purposes. I had been compelled for a time to negotiate with officials in a number of large corporations, and it was during this time that I learned much about the manner in which great industrial enterprises are maintained on a profitable basis. That the principles of the Christian faith were not considered as the standard to be followed always, I saw but too soon. I thought that a great reformer like Luther or Calvin would have found much to complain of, nor did I feel that the mass of the workmen were generally treated with the consideration all human beings deserve. The stage had been well prepared for the violation of law by radical and unscrupulous employees in some of our leading industries.

It was during the sit-down strikes in the General Motors plants at Flint and elsewhere that the Booth newspapers in Michigan published an interview article of mine on the sit-down strike movement. In those hectic days very little was known in this country about the new weapon employed by labor in its attempt to improve working conditions and to have its wages raised. All kinds of loose statements were made by commentators in our leading newspapers, and finally some of the more important periodicals presented viewpoints of writers who obviously knew practically nothing about the subject and its background.

To the Booth newspapers goes the credit for having been willing in the early stages of the great strike to publish material which described the actual conditions leading up to the sit-down strike movement. Early in March, 1937, they published a second article of mine, containing extracts from a longer composition which was reproduced in full in the July number of the *Calvin Forum*.

In the first of the two newspaper articles I made a number of statements which must have surprised many readers, but which turned out to be correct. I pointed out that Madam Perkins, the secretary of labor, was entirely mistaken when on January 26th she

stated that the legality of the sit-down strike had not been determined. Not until fifty-two days after the significant decision made by Judge Gladola in Flint on February 2nd, so pointed out the new York Times afterward, did Miss Perkins finally admit that she had been in the wrong, saying that she had spoken before the Michigan courts had handed down their decisions. The New York Times asked her then why she had to wait so long to acknowledge her error, but the Booth newspapers had stated early in February that a person placed in her high position ought to have understood the most elemental laws of every state in the union before having received her appointment. Why could she not have known what must have happened long before Judge Gladola spoke? Too late she tried to make amends by openly confessing her changed attitude in the following words: "Nor should disobedience to these orders be counseled by any government official. The courts are an instrumentality established by the people themselves as a method agreed upon by the citizens in a democracy as a practical way of settling civil disputes among the people. It is necessary to have and sustain such a method in order that we may live together in a free democracy."

Furthermore, I had remarked in my first interview article that "there never had been a time when the American workman had such favorable opportunities to obtain bargaining rights from the employer as now, and it would be a shame to see him lose these opportunities because certain agitators have encouraged him to violate the laws of our state and national governments." While even so conservative a newspaper as the New York Times was carrying feature articles dated from Flint during the strike there, indicating with undisguised admiration how successful the sit-down technique was, the Booth newspapers boldly struck out for truth and justice. The best friends the workman had early this year were those papers which fearlessly urged him to abide under the law and refuse to elevate himself above the law, where no human being can ever be safe for very long. In April, 1937, the New York Times, like the secretary of labor, gave expression to at least a slight degree of regret for having pursued a wrong course in those most dangerous days when the law-breakers were encouraged by men and women placed in responsible positions.

It is also interesting to note that so famous a writer as Walter Lippmann was finally forced to retrace his steps. In common with other learned commentators in the East, he was bewildered by the seemingly sudden appearance of the weapon forged by labor with which to punish "notorious oppressors" like Mr. Sloan, president of the General Motors Corp. He argued that the sit-down strike had originated in this country in 1936 and had spread from here to France, which plainly showed his ignorance of the real development of the sit-down strike movement. Then he proceeded to attack the management of the General Motors Corp.—a fashionable thing to do in January and February, 1937. Lippmann, in common with other influential writers, alleged that the corporation had not given its workmen proper wages nor had it provided suitable working conditions for them, hence the only recourse open to the men was the seizure of the plants, especially so since the corporation was said to be unwilling to enter into collective bargaining with the workmen. "It has been shown," wrote Lippmann in an article which was published on February 20th, "that when this elementary human right is in any way refused the result is a condition of tolerated anarchy; public officials will not enforce the full rights of property as in Flint. . . . Mr. Sloan had to learn that truth by an extremely expensive process of education." Public sentiment, thought Mr. Lippmann, was decidedly on the side of the sit-down strikers.

The truth of the matter was, as the reader will recall, that the General Motors Corp. merely asked that its property be evacuated by the workmen. As soon as this were done, the officials were ready to start collective bargaining. But the workmen were advised to hold the plants as a ransom and so extort more favorable terms. Besides, the fact that approximately one thousand men in Flint had prevented at least eight thousand other men from continuing to work, seemed of no consequence to Mr. Lippmann. It would have been more appropriate for him to have concluded that the president of the General Motors Corp. was not so stupid as to require that "extremely expensive process of education," and that public sentiment in Michigan in general was not favorable to the manner in which the governor spurned the rights of the large majority of workingmen who preferred not to break the laws of their state. Furthermore, only those critics not familiar with actual conditions in the state of

Michigan would allege that the general public gladly tolerated the total disregard of property rights. The real issue was not whether labor had the right to bargain with employers, since it already had that right, but whether illegal seizure of property should be countenanced. The spokesmen for the General Motors Corp. consistently claimed that this seizure of property was the one obstacle in the path to negotiation.

How fatal has been the mistake of those men and women placed in responsible positions who knew practically nothing about the origins of the underlying principles of the sit-down strike movement! To blame the sins of a great corporation for the outbreak of sit-down strikes is to delude an innocent and befuddled public. To argue that these strikes originated in the United States and spread from this country to France is to expose one's ignorance of recent European and American history. The basic principle of the sit-down strike movement is no more and no less than a symptom of communism, for it is an utter disregard for the most hallowed property rights and it is followed always by a contempt for honorable judicial procedure. Such principles do not germinate on American soil, notwithstanding the learned pronouncements of certain American writers. A thorough knowledge of recent events in Europe is absolutely required to understand and to interpret correctly the sit-down strike movement.

It is a well-known fact that during the past twenty years communism has won many millions of converts, first in Russia, then temporarily in Italy, and finally in France and Spain. Communism is marked by antagonism to the old Anglo-Saxon principles of liberty and democracy which for decades have been upheld in this country by nearly all our citizens. Communism also is featured by an extraordinary lack of respect for one's government, as was unfortunately shown by thousands of deluded Italians who professed to despise those soldiers who had been wounded in the service of their country. In 1919 and 1920 it was fashionable in various parts of Italy to inflict corporal punishment upon crippled soldiers recently returned from the battlefields. This punishment was meted out by communistic citizens who thought they were doing their own country a great service by mutilating men already unsound in body through services rendered for the protection of their persecutors.

During those same two dreadful years 1919 and 1920 other symptoms of communism also made their appearance in Italy, and since this unfortunate country was still suffering terribly from the wounds acquired in the Great War and from the disillusionment which followed when the allied powers were willing to give so little for so many sacrifices sustained, the Italian government stood helplessly by when the communists simply ran wild.

I was in Europe during these two years and also in the following year. Being at that time a Dutch citizen, I was permitted to travel and study freely in Germany, Austria, Italy, France and Belgium. Following first the newspaper accounts and afterward seeing with my own eyes what communism did to Italy, I saw the workmen first begin to strike in the orthodox manner, then throw out the superintendents and the foremen, sometimes nearly killing them, and finally seize the factories for themselves. In February, 1921, I was in Florence, and there I observed the inevitable results of the sit-down strikes, when machine guns mowed down mobs in the streets and men murdered each other in cold blood. One day it seemed to me as if one whole section of the city was in flames.

In Italy the workmen received no encouragement from the national government, but, inflamed by ignorant leaders, they deliberately broke the laws of the land. One of these leaders was Mussolini himself, who at that time had no conception of the damage he was inflicting upon the cause of labor. And only much later did he repent of his course and turn conservative.

It may seem a simple task to brush away with a wave of the hand as it were the fears so frequently expressed in recent months by many intelligent persons in this country about the insidious character of communism and the danger of its spread on this side of the Atlantic. Easy enough it is to argue that the sit-down strike movement has nothing to do with communism, just as a harmless cold has no relationship with pneumonia. There are thousands of prominent men and women among us today who vehemently and bitterly protest that their principles and their conduct are as far removed from communism as is the south pole from the north pole. Little do they realize that they manifest the first symptoms of the dreaded disease. To say for example that the sit-down strikes have very little in common with the occupation of the factories in north-

ern Italy by half a million workmen during the years 1919 and 1920, is to ignore the very simple scientific fact that the former is the first stage in a development which ends sometimes with the latter phenomenon, just as in the course of a disease contracted the patient shows at first certain symptoms which may be checked or which may multiply and become ever more serious.

Very illuminating are the words of Ivanoe Bonomi, the former Prime Minister of Italy in his work entitled *From Socialism to Fascism,* especially on pp. 32-34, where Mr. Bonomi shows that the strikes of 1919 and 1920, followed by the occupation of numerous factories by the socialists, "ended by exasperating all the other classes of society without doing them serious harm. The enemy remained unhurt, but determined to be revenged on those who had tried to terrorize them with arrogant threats of ineffectual violence." The whole movement was decisively defeated "by a method which the weakness and not the foresight of the government imposed, and which will astonish future historians." The movement was annihilated by non-resistance, for the workmen who tried to run the factories lost completely the respect of the general public, and in a very short time had to abandon their stupid experiment.

Gaetano Salvemini, one of Italy's foremost historians of the present century, writes in his book, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy,* that during the lengthy negotiations precipitated by the occupation of the factories, "Mussolini supported the demands of the obstructionists; and when the occupation of the factories took place, he supported the Extremist Socialists against the Moderates." There is no need of enlarging on the patent fact that sit-down strikes are no longer permissible in Italy.

It has been argued by learned commentators in Washington whose knowledge of European history is pathetically limited that the Italian people cannot be compared with the American public, which is vastly superior. When the Secretary of Labor declared in January that it was not established whether sit-down strikes were legal or illegal, she implied that before long the law-breakers would be declared law-abiding citizens. In the horse-and buggy stage the simple-minded people thought it best to abide by the decisions of lawfully instituted courts, but in this enlightened age of ours, so argue many writers even now, progress renders such courts

antiquated. Property rights are no longer valid. It was not long ago, continue these writers, that picketing was considered illegal, so why should not the sit-down strikes be legalized? Why should not the cruel owners of factories be compelled to furnish the workingmen while on strike with heat, water, electricity and various other comforts? Why should not the government subsidize the down-trodden strikers and their families?

The same arguments were advanced in France during the summer of 1936, when I was traveling there. They sounded very familiar to me then, having followed them in the Italian and German newspapers sixteen years earlier, and having discussed them with various members of the Supreme Court in The Hague. Moreover, during the course of that summer I was frequently entertained by Miss Catherine Kuyper, the daughter of that brilliant Dutch statesman and author who when he was Prime Minister had to cope with socialistic experiments more than thirty years ago. Numerous incidents which had never been discussed in printed form were explained to the writer by Miss Kuyper. One evening the sit-down strikes were carefully analyzed in her home by two distinguished members of the Dutch supreme court, one of whom was the former governor of Dutch Guiana (Surinam). It was predicted then wtih the utmost certainty that the sit-down strike movement had not long to live, because the general public in France was too enlightened to tolerate the violation of property rights. Such anarchy, it was argued, might last longer in the United States of America, where the public was easily misled by agitators of small intelligence and inadequate training.

Obviously, sit-down strikes are no longer possible in France today for the reasons indicated to me in 1936. The present government of France has been compelled by public sentiment to eject sit-down strikers from factories occupied early in the year 1937, and as a result the strikes have dwindled to very insignificant proportions. The compulsory arbitration law provides that labor disputes must be submitted to a "fixed procedure of settlement before a strike or a lockout can be declared."

This law, together with the evacuation enforced by the French police of factories occupied by sit-down strikers during the month of January, 1937, effectually rendered the whole sit-down strike

movement antiquated in France. It would not be very intelligent to aver that the French people are still in the horse-and-buggy stage! The whole thing is also most abhorrent to the general public in England. The writer might add other countries as well, as his recent experiences could substantiate, but it would be said by communistic sympathizers in this country that these countries are too backward to be considered. For is not Germany now a terrible country to live in under the Nazi suppression? And is not Austria hopelessly behind the times in being so reluctant to surrender the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith?

Jesus of Nazareth once told an interesting parable about three men who had received respectively ten talents, five talents and one talent. The poor man refused to use his one talent and buried it, while the other two utilized theirs to the utmost. Why should the poor man work with such a small amount of capital, when he was just as good a person as the man who had obtained ten talents? What right did that other man have to get ten more talents and subsequently twenty more, and so on? So reasoned Mr. Homer Martin when he told his spellbound audiences that the Dupont family had no right to buy General Motors common stock at $4.76 a share and make a profit on each share of $4.50 during the year 1936. Just what did Mr. Martin propose to do about it? Did he believe that the sit-down strike would impoverish the Dupont family sufficiently to please him, or did he want the government to confiscate its property for the benefit of those who had neither the intelligence nor the industry nor the integrity to use the money properly? If Mr. Martin had had the courage to remain in the Christian ministry, he would have seen the solution of this problem in the teachings of Jesus.

The history of property held in common (which is not necessarily communism) has always intrigued me, and in the year 1924 I published the first comprehensive history of the Brotherhood of the Common Life under the title of *The Christian Renaissance.* The contents of this extensive work attracted much attention in Europe. I showed that the Christian Church for centuries frowned upon property held in common outside of the monasteries and convents. But the Brethren of the Common Life, who flourished during the fifteenth century, were able to advance cogent arguments to show

that the "common life" was feasible in any orderly community, as indicated above, in Chapter IV. Those who look with supercilious scorn upon European civilization of the horse-and-buggy stage might do well to read some of their illuminating treatises. They will more clearly understand the significance of the words pronounced recently in a radio address by a distinguished Catholic scholar in this country who justly remarked that "a communist is a capitalist without cash in his pocket."

Now it might be argued that this discussion of communism and of property held in common has nothing to do with the sit-down strikes in the state of Michigan. Have we not been told repeatedly that the sins of the great corporations have caused these strikes, rather than a philosophy of life or new theories of property rights? Or else, have the new theories advanced by labor not been at the root of the whole matter? Famous lawyers and well-known senators at Washington have harped on these subjects so much that many persons now believe all has been settled. But where did the American workman get this idea of the sit-down strike? When the General Motors Corporation refused to treat the workmen properly, why did the latter turn to this new technique? It certainly cannot be proved that the workmen in desperation grasped the sit-down method by finding it floating somewhere in the air, where it was manufactured by their own desperate plight. And yet many writers must have left that very impression upon a multitude of their bewildered readers. Other writers have pointed out that the workman acquires a certain right in the ownership of the factory in which he happens to be working. Again I would ask the question, Where did he get this idea? Did he really find it growing somewhere, having been sown by his own misery and oppression?

We shall in the long run have to return to my original thesis, the influence of communism, as clearly shown in Italy and again in France. The communists in Russia and their satellites in this country have openly congratulated the agitators in Flint and Detroit for their successes obtained, by having followed the identical methods which had been employed many times before in various European countries. For example, on March 21, 1937, the following dispatch came out of Moscow: "K. Redmill, writing in the *Communist International Magazine,* No. 2, today praised the 'work of the Commun-

ists in the General Motors strike' at Detroit and Flint, Mich. 'During the entire strike,' he said, 'Communists were active in a leading role. They conducted many-sided work in helping strikers, collected money and carried out demonstrations of solidarity. The Communist Party through its central organ, the *New York Daily Worker,* gave advice on how to conduct the struggle, and in many instances this advice was adopted.' "

Although the Communists in Russia flatter themselves too much in thinking that they have accomplished a great task in Michigan, their remarks indicate that they recognize the salient features of the communistic philosophy in the attitude shown by labor during the recent strikes at Flint and in Detroit. They know very well the meaning of the circulars handed to the strikers in some of the leading hotels in Detroit which stated that the diningroom was theirs as well as the bar, for the President wanted them to have the good things of life. These circulars did not emanate directly from the communists but were issued by the United Automobile Workers of America, who early in April were finally compelled to purge their membership of several communists, in order to maintain order and live up to the agreement signed with the General Motors Corp. After the union had agreed to permit no more sit-down strikes, it was considerably embarrassed by thirty-one such strikes within five weeks, caused "spontaneously," it was alleged, but they were started by various members of the union, and therefore the union was most assuredly responsible.

It has been most unfortunate that the U.A.W. took over some of the deceitful tactics of the Russian communists. When the strike against General Motors was in progress, the public was informed by the union that conditions in the Chrysler plants were very satisfactory, in order that General Motors would be forced quickly to come to terms, since its dealers were clamoring for cars. But after General Motors surrendered amicably, and the strike moved against the Chrysler Corp., it was suddenly discovered that working conditions were terrible in the Chrysler plants, the wages far too low, while the company officials were unwilling to grant their workmen the bargaining rights to which they were entitled, although they had just been held up as models for all companies to follow.

If the Committee for Industrial Organization and the United

Automobile Workers were so concerned about the "dreadful" working conditions prevailing in this country, why did they organize their first sit-down strikes in those industries where the conditions were not the worst but the best, namely, the Radio Corp., General Motors, the Goodyear Tire Corp., and the Chrysler Corp.? Much was said about the great corporations which refused to abide by the provisions of the Wagner act, and yet the first great strike was begun in the Radio Corp., after this company had followed all the features of the act, and had arranged for the execution of the same. But Mr. J. L. Lewis declined to carry out these provisions, for he was more interested in obtaining power for himself and for his union than in the well-being of the workmen. I quote from a syndicated article by Dorothy Thompson published on April 2, 1937: "Wage and hour issues were open to negotiation from the outset. Nevertheless the union pulled a costly strike because—Mr. Lewis was candid enough to admit it—the only way he could get the members organized was to get them into a strike." By the way, this writer, like Walter Lippmann, changed her attitude toward the sit-down strikes considerably during the spring of 1937. What a pity that such influential authors did not know enough about the basic elements of the sit-down strike movement to have helped prevent it in Michigan, or at least to have helped check it before the end of last January. Think of how much they would have saved the taxpayers in Michigan!

And what did the workmen gain in the strikes in the General Motors and Chrysler plants? In the former a wage increase of five cents an hour, which they probably would have obtained without the sit-down strike. If it were not for the generosity of the gullible public, which will have to pay most of the bills, the workmen would have had to work nearly two years before the increase in wages would have wiped out the losses incurred during the strikes in Flint and elsewhere. The sit-down strike in the Chrysler plants caused terrific resentment throughout the country, as may be gathered from the very marked change in sentiment in almost every quarter. It is little wonder that the workmen had to withdraw the demand for exclusive bargaining rights, had to promise to permit no more strikes for one year at least, and had to content themselves with loss of wages for several weeks instead of gain.

The most optimistic person in the whole controversy was perhaps

the governor of Michigan, whose motives were those of a sincere and benevolent reformer. After the return of the spring elections of 1937 were made public, showing that in Genesee, Oakland, Saginaw, Jackson and Kent counties the huge majorities for the Democrats of November, 1936, had been replaced by majorities for the Republicans, the governor stated that in those counties which suffered most from the strikes the elections indicated an endorsement of his policies. Wayne County alone among the industrial counties remained on his side. But even in Wayne County the Democrats had been weakened noticeably. One need only to read the editorials in the Detroit News to see how this great newspaper, which in 1933 so strongly supported the Democratic Party as against the other two leading papers, has repeatedly launched bitter attacks upon the lawlessness that has followed the settlement of the General Motors strike in February, 1937.

I repeat that the governor of Michigan was a sincere and benevolent reformer. For example, his whole-hearted support of the civil service reform, in which respect he followed in the footsteps of his Republican predecessor, merits the highest praise. Furthermore, the scandalous bribery connected with the purchase of supplies for the various state institutions, he steadfastly assailed. I have seen with my own eyes what used to be done in the state capital at Lansing. Other reforms could also be mentioned to the credit of Governor Murphy. On the other hand, his handling of the General Motors strike was not followed, as he thought, by beneficial results but by such outrageous lawlessness that the whole nation stood before the world as a traitor to the principles of the founders of its enlightened government and its liberal social order. Even so bitter an enemy of the president of General Motors as Walter Lippmann, had to admit that the Chrysler strike was a ghastly blunder. In a syndicated newspaper article of April 13, 1937, he made this remark: "There was no justification whatever for the attack on Chrysler." And who would dare to deny that the Chrysler strike would have been avoided under a firm governor? Very misleading indeed were the words uttered by the governor at Muskegon on October 16, 1937, in which he sought to justify his method of compelling the General Motors Corporation to surrender to the law-breakers, since the latter were

permitted to hold the property of the corporation as a valuable ransom. The governor said:

"Last winter, this Democratic administration was faced by an industrial crisis of historic proportions. A vast labor organization movement, bred in the black depths of the depression and driven by a natural human desire to escape the specter of insecurity, came to a head in Michigan's giant automobile industry. Thousands of men, millions of dollars in property were involved. The situation was without precedent in American history. The administration, recognizing that an extraordinary crisis—fraught with danger for perhaps the whole nation—was at hand, sought to deal with it practically, reasonably and intelligently.

"Thousands of strikers appeared to be in defiance of a court order. There was a hysterical demand from the unreasoning for a blood purge—for anything that would satisfy a blind insistence on legal technicalities. We refused to be swayed by hysteria. We only asked that enforcement of the court order be reasonably postponed, pending the outcome of the conferences because—and I cannot stress this too heavily—we believed an agreement was at hand. Our suggestion was followed and five days later the strike was settled.

"Tens of thousands of men went back to work under conditions that were acceptable to them because they were just. We returned them to the task of earning their daily bread without weakly resorting to bayonets and guns. That is why the automobile industry is stabilized today and prospering as never before.

"That is why the workmen today don't hate their government and they inevitably would if that government had chosen to be ruthless and oppressive."

It appears to me, however, that an honest study of the records cannot substantiate this verdict. I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that the General Motors Corporation received no consideration whatever. It was simply forced to yield to the demands of irresponsible law-breakers. Afterward one might say with a show of justice and liberalism that bloodshed had been avoided, but that was just as true of the state of New Jersey, whose governor wrote me on March 3rd, 1937, the following words: "I agree with you that the tacit approval lent to the abrogation of the right to own and enjoy

property, by the National Administration is, to say the least, un-American."

Governor Harold G. Hoffman was the first governor in this country to resist the efforts of the Committee for Industrial Organization, and the result of his bold speeches was gratifying. Let me quote a few paragraphs from the address which he presented on Washington's birthday in 1937, a copy of which I received from him with his letter:

"The government of this nation must be a government of all the people and not an alliance with a part of the people. There are grounds for fears on the part of all who love America in the appearance upon our industrial horizon of a self-appointed leader and a militant minority which does not total two percent of our population, claiming governmental blessing as it seizes private property, defies the law and denies the authority of the remaining ninety-eight percent of our people. It insists that it shall rule in its own name, for its own selfish purposes, and that all rights except its own shall be abrogated. This is the Committee for Industrial Organization, headed by Mr. John Lewis, who has, in effect, openly boasted that he, and members of his organization, are responsible for the election of the President of the United States, and who has demanded a pay-off.

"Upon the published announcement that this organization was preparing a mass attack upon New Jersey, and with information before me that its organizers had been for several months at work in New Jersey industries, using even such questionable methods as the distribution among workers of circulars bearing the inscription 'A Message to you from the President' and 'The President Wants you to Join the Union,' I recently issued a statement that was, in effect, advance notice to this organization, and to any other organizations, that the lawless methods must not be resorted to in New Jersey.

"I said:

" 'In order that the organizations to which I have referred may not be misled into attempting here the same lawless conduct by which they claim to have achieved some success, and for which they have obtained immunity in Michigan, let them be warned in advance that such conduct will not be tolerated or permitted by the people of

this State, nor by the government which they have set up for their protection.

" 'To the citizens of New Jersey I promise—and to lawless organizations I give warning—that, if necessary, the entire resources of the State will be called into action to preserve the rights, liberties and property of its citizens.'

"I meant just that.

"To hold a factory for ransom by the process of a 'sit-down' strike is to refuse reason and law. Older and more firmly established labor organization practice had made great strides without recourse to this un-American course of action. The most valuable of human rights is the right to earn, to own, and to enjoy property. You cannot weaken or ignore property rights in America without destroying the personal and human rights of the worker himself. No issue can be of sufficient importance to be worth the cancellation of this right, which has been won after centuries of conflict. To abrogate it now, for any reason, would be to start mankind marching backward toward that past when freedom was only a hope.

"Since the formation of this Government, the conditions of living in the United States have drawn to our shores millions of immigrants who left their old familiar homes because they wished to escape the hard conditions in the Old World. Nothing has happened which makes it necessary, or even desirable, for us to import the conditions so many of our people crossed the ocean to escape."

Is it not remarkable how effective such words were in the highly industrialized state of New Jersey? Has not this governor saved his fellow-citizens an immense amount of humiliation and expense? And what happened in Santa Monica, California, when the strikers in the Douglas plant said that they were ready to die for their cause, but evacuated the plant peacefully without bloodshed, because the local authorities in that state believed in firmness?

Let us consider now what the workmen in Italy and France have gotten out of their occupation of factories and their sit-down strikes. They have lost the right to start any strikes until the employers show no desire to negotiate properly; even then they cannot get wages raised beyond a mere pittance because they are the creatures of their governments, which have to see to it that the national industries will be able to compete with those of other countries. I have

seen in France how little a workman can buy with his wages. For example, not one of them can afford to run even the most economical automobile. Should not our workmen express their gratitude to those statesmen and newspaper staffs who prevented the radical agitators from driving the general public to desperation and so take away that political, economic, social and religious freedom of which our people have been so justly proud?

It should be abundantly clear to every workman in the United States, whether he calls himself a Christian or not, that to seek any gain for himself through the use of the sit-down strike is very foolish, for it antagonizes all law-abiding citizens. Moreover, such a method, even though it goes unpunished because a governor of a state or the president of the whole country condones the guilt of the law-breakers, defies the most fundamental laws of all civilized communities in the western world. And to argue that the end justifies the means will do no good, since foul means will inevitably end up with foul results. Jesus correctly reasoned that thistles could not produce luscious figs, and He concluded that "by their fruits shall ye know them."

About one hundred years ago, when Thomas Carlyle, the distinguished British historian, prepared his immortal work, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, With Elucidations,* he was struck by the shocking manner in which the English people had drifted away from the intense religious zeal and heroism of the seventeenth century Puritans. Consequently, he devoted a chapter to the description of this sad phenomenon, and he called it "Anti-dryasdust." Carlyle's pen was laid away forever before our own century opened, and he lived in another land than ours. And yet, when we read his glowing tribute to the prince of the Puritans, and to his age, we can easily apply it to the change that has befallen our own people:

"We have wandered far away from the ideas which guided us in that Century, and indeed which had guided us in all the preceding Centuries, but of which that Century was the ultimate manifestation; we have wandered very far; and must endeavor to return, and connect ourselves therewith again! . . . The Christian Doctrines which then dwelt alive in every heart, have now in a manner died out of all hearts,—very mournful to behold; and are not the guidance of this world any more. Nay worse still, the Cant of them does

yet dwell alive with us, little doubting that it is Cant;—in which fatal intermediate state the Eternal Sacredness of this Universe itself, of this Human Life itself, has fallen dark to the most of us, and we think that too a Cant and a Creed. Thus the old names and similitudes of belief suggest new things to us,—not august and divine, but hypocritical, pitiable, detestable. The old names and similitudes of belief still circulate from tongue to tongue, though now in such a ghastly condition: not as commandments of the living God, which we must do, or perish eternally; alas, no, as something very different from that! Here properly lies the grand unintelligibility of the Seventeenth Century for us." [11]

Puritanism, continued Carlyle, is not of the nineteenth century, and we might tell him that it is also not of the twentieth century, except in limited areas, especially in Scotland and Holland. Most Americans at least can say with Carlyle: "The Age of the Puritans is not extinct only and gone away from us, but it is as if fallen beyond the capabilities of Memory herself; it is grown unintelligible, what we may call incredible. Its earnest Purport awakens now no resonance in our frivolous hearts. We understand not even in imagination, one of a thousand of us, what it ever could have meant. It seems delirious, delusive; the sound of it has become tedious as a tale of past stupidities. Not the body of heroic Puritanism only, which is bound to die, but the soul also, which was and should have been, and yet shall be immortal, has for the present passed away."

It was the Puritan Age that gave this country its birth and its inherent strength. Whatever may have been the follies and failings of the Puritans, they prepared for us the foundations upon which to build our political and social structure as a nation. Can we not now learn, as some other peoples have recently learned, to return to all that was noble, pure and good in Puritanism, and so revitalize all our social relationships? I am reminded of what Thomas Carlyle had to say about Mark Noble, one of Cromwell's biographers, who had remarked that Cromwell in his first and second letters "was far gone in religious enthusiasm." Carlyle observed: "Yes, my reverend imbecile friend, he is clearly one of those singular Christian enthusiasts who believe that they have a soul to be saved, even as you do, my reverend imbecile friend, that you have a stomach to be sat-

[11] See the edition published by Scribner's in 1897, Vol. I, pp. 1, 4.

isfied—and who likewise, astonishing to say, actually take some trouble about that. Far gone indeed, my reverend imbecile friend!"

Far gone indeed are many preachers and commentators who have almost no sense of spiritual values left in them. When they concede to the workmen that the only thing of importance to them is higher wages and lower rents, why then should these workmen worry about breaking a few laws? How natural for one of their spokesmen to appear in a church building in Ann Arbor, Michigan, as happened one day in the summer of 1937, and tell his enthusiastic auditors that the sit-down strike method was after all the best weapon they had! A few weeks later, at the national convention of the United Automobile Workers, held at Milwaukee, the same arguments were repeated so successfully that the assembly adopted this method as their future right. This they chose to do after many ominous warnings had been sounded by men and women who previously had supported this method, but who had had enough common sense to retrace their steps. "O my reverend imbecile friend," said Carlyle, "hadst thou thyself never any moral life, but only a sensitive and digestive?" Let us hope that these friends of ours will soon discover that they do have a soul to be saved, and that they do have moral duties to perform!

That religion and "social justice" are often confused in the minds of old and young today, may be seen in these words taken from an editorial which appeared on October 8, 1937, in the Michigan Daily: "The progressive attitude, which many churches and church leaders are beginning to assume in place of the traditional backward-looking conservatism of religious institutions in the past, was excellently summed up by the Rt. Rev. Edward L. Parsons, Bishop of California, at the 52nd triennial convention of the Presbyterian Church [read Episcopal Church] meeting this week. 'There is not much chance,' Bishop Parsons declared, 'of touching the men and women and children fighting for their very bread in the coal mines and cotton fields with the message that God is love.' . . . And today, above all, when a section of the Christian Church is lending its vigorous support to such a savagely anti-Christian movement, both in method and aim, as the Franco rebellion, the note struck by Bishop Parsons is indeed a timely one."

The editorial of October 8th was promptly followed on the next

day by a lengthy attack on the American Federation of Labor for having been so hostile to the C.I.O., and, on the same page, by a condemnation of fascism. Thus was the policy continued which in the academic year 1936-1937 brought to one of the editors a prize for having done the most on the local campus "for the advancement of religion." This "advancement of religion" had consisted in a systematic defence of the C.I.O. throughout its law-breaking career; a severe indictment of organized Christianity as represented by the largest denominations in the world today; repeated criticisms of the rebels in Spain, who were said to have attempted to undermine and destroy the Christian Church, although their opponents, who were guilty of enormous destruction of church property and the murder of untold numbers of priests and nuns, seemed to do that very same thing, but were commended for their bravery; and the manner in which the Popular Front Party in France was lauded for having given many new privileges to the workmen through the sit-down strike. The end justifies the means, so we were told; and the progressive conception of the freedom of the press will henceforth consist in giving to a few radicals among our emancipated youth the control of a student publication which will be sent all over a great state. As this paper enters libraries and homes, it will tell a wholly distorted picture of the social life and the viewpoints of thousands of students who were never consulted, and of the opinions of hundreds of members of the faculty who received no attention whatsoever.

Not very long ago I had a discussion with a certain student pastor about the mission of Jesus of Nazareth. The pastor maintained that Christ had been primarily interested in freeing the Jews from the political dominion of the Romans, in relieving unemployment and in improving social conditions generally. I protested that this was contrary to the reports presented in the New Testament and in patristic literature, but he firmly clung to his standpoint. On the first of May of that same year he took a truckload of young people to Detroit to celebrate a grand May Day parade, but his flock was not appreciated by the conservative and backward-looking spectators. Consequently, the forward-looking pastor had to move on, notwithstanding his excellent qualities in other directions. And, similarly, some of our young radicals will experience many keen

disappointments, for there is much in the history of the human race that is worthy of serious study. Those who can look only forward, are gazing with rapture and enthusiasm at a blank space; and those who do not possess the industry to investigate what other peoples have done with their economic and social problems, will flounder about in darkness and disgrace. It is, therefore, the sincere hope of the present writer that he may have induced some wayward wanderers who do not sufficiently appreciate what the founders of our nation have done for us, to return to their history texts before they shall attempt to reform our social organism.

Our liberal friends will no doubt observe that we are simply calamity howlers, that social and religious conditions are constantly improving, and that all we need to do is to continue to travel the road to "Liberalism." It would be well for these "liberals" to read the editorial which on October 24, 1937, appeared in the Detroit Free Press. It was entitled, "Too far from God." Cold figures were presented there which show that conditions in this country, at least among our young people, "are worse than mere paganism." For "a pagan at least has some thought of responsibility to a higher power." The editorial also pointed out that when a people "believes in no God but itself and holds itself accountable to only itself," it "has detoured into a quicksand. It loses all vision and faces early ruin, no matter how rich, powerful and progressive it may seem to be." Is it any wonder that workmen in the prime of manhood have begun to break laws for which their forefathers so valiantly fought? And is it any wonder that our greatest thinkers in Washington and New York became puzzled as they watched the antics of the stock market?

The decline in the stock market in New York, which began in the middle of August, 1937, and which assumed the proportions of a calamitous route on October 18 and 19, 1937, indicated clearly the reactions of the leading business men in this country toward the lawless manner in which the labor chiefs had sought to treat the owners of business property. On October 18th, Mr. R. W. Reading, the City Clerk of Detroit and candidate for mayor, made this statement to a group of business men: "Would you have believed, if you were asked three years ago that men would walk in and take possession of private property? It wouldn't have seemed possible

before that Flint incident." But now, so argued the speaker, the moral restraint which characterized our workmen before 1936, has broken down as a result of the unfortunate state of mind exhibited by the leaders in the C.I.O. Consequently, the big corporations, seeing the attitude of the national administration and of the governor of the state, had lost that sense of security which formerly marked their course of action, and which was one of the chief characteristics of American business. It was, therefore, not so much the interference in business by the national administration, which caused the break in the stock market, as Walter Lippmann erroneously reasoned in a syndicated newspaper article of October 19, 1937, as the negative side of the issue, namely, the refusal to check and condemn the work of the law-breakers who occupied other people's property with impunity and forced many employers to accede to unfavorable terms, thus causing too rapid a rise in operating costs. Business had been able to adjust itself very nicely to government supervision, as it had previously done in Great Britain; but this lawlessness, which is forbidden in Great Britain, was like a canker destroying the fabric of wholesome business relations. Our government and our labor leaders will indeed confer a great benefit upon the American people by paying more heed to these words of Jesus: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these [material] things shall be added unto you."

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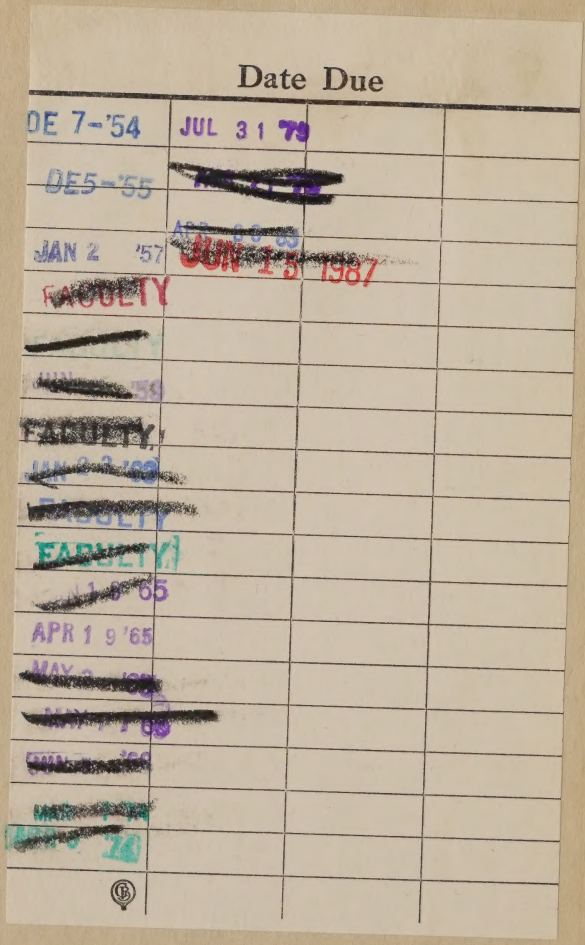
ERRATA

Page 10, read *Elvira* for *Elmira.*
Page 26, read *cumulare* for *cumular,* and *scholastic* for *scholastics.*
Page 28, read *Carthage* for *Cathage.*
Page 48, read *property* for *proprty.*
Page 62, read *florenos* for *florens.*
Page 87, read *Histoire* for *Histore.*
Pages 95 and 96, foot-notes, read *Wiedertäufer* and *Löffler.*
Page 109, read *Elements* for *Element.*
Page 125, read *Protestants* for *Portestants.*
Page 135, foot-note, read *Behauptungen.*
Page 183, read *Siena* for *Sienas.*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